

THE TRAILING SPOUSE IN MISSION LEADERSHIP:
STEWARDED COMMODITY OR LOST RESOURCE?

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY IN LEADERSHIP

BY

JULIE A. TIESSEN

JANUARY 2008

Dedicated to my father, Paul Cairns, who passed away on October 20, 2006.

He believed in me and supported God's call on my life to missions.

He was proud of me as a woman in ministry and as a leader.

More than anyone he would have loved to see me
graduate with my Doctor of Ministry.

CONTENTS

PREFACE	x
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	xxii
ABSTRACT	xxiv
Chapter	
1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING	1
The Problem	1
The Purpose	2
The Procedure	4
The Prognosis	5
2. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	7
Old Testament	7
New Testament	9
Church History	13
Theological Atmosphere	13
Theological Crisis	15
Summary	17
3. LITERATURE REVIEW	18
Mission	18

Women in Mission	18
Married Women in Mission	23
Member Care	27
Missionary Member Care	27
Missionary Member Care in General	27
Member Care for Women	29
Member Care for Married Women	30
Retention Factors for Married Women	33
Transition Care	35
Transition	35
Missionary Transition	37
Transition for Spouses of Mission Leaders	39
The Trailing Spouse	41
The Trailing Spouse in General	41
The Trailing Spouse in Mission	47
The Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership	48
Leadership	49
Mission Leadership	50
Women in Mission Leadership	52
Wives in Mission Leadership	59
Summary	63
4. PROJECT DESIGN	65

Significance	65
Methodology	66
Coding of Documents	70
Analysis of Data	71
Constructed Reality	72
Free Nodes	72
Tree Nodes	73
Search Procedure	74
Report Procedure	75
Actual Findings	76
5. FINDINGS	78
Mission Field	78
Missionary Call	78
Education	79
Spiritual Gifts	80
Ministry	80
Marriage and Ministry Ethos	84
Mission Leadership	88
Proposal	88
Transition	91
Mission Agency Ethos	95
Status and Role	101

Longevity	114
Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership	116
Issues	116
Children	130
Resolution	136
Attitudes	147
Advice to Mission Agencies	151
6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	156
Conclusions to Findings	157
Mission Field	157
Missionary Call	157
Education	157
Spiritual Gifts	158
Ministry	159
Marriage and Ministry Ethos	160
Mission Leadership	165
Proposal	166
Transition	168
Mission Agency Ethos	169
Status	173
Role	174
Longevity	179

Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership	180
Issues	180
Losses	185
Children	188
Resolution	192
Attitudes	197
Recommendations to Mission Agencies	200
Answer to the Main Question	203
Recommendations for Further Study	204
APPENDICES	
1. MORALE LEVELS IN JOB TRANSITION	207
2. INTRODUCTORY EMAIL LETTER	209
3. SPOUSAL TRANSITION IN MISSION LEADERSHIP	214
4. SAMPLE OF CODED DOCUMENT	216
5. FREE NODE LISTING	217
6. TREE NODE LISTING	219
7. THE NORMAL GRIEF RECOVERY JOURNEY INTERFACED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF REPATRIATION FOR TRAILING SPOUSES	223
8. NORMAL RESPONSES TO REPATRIATION FOR TRAILING SPOUSES	224
9. MAPPING MY PERSONAL JOURNEY OF REPATRIATION	225
10. QUESTIONS COUPLES CONSIDERING MISSION LEADERSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA SHOULD ASK THE MISSION AGENCY AND INFORMATION COUPLES SHOULD DISCLOSE	226

11. QUESTIONS THE MISSION AGENCY SHOULD ASK COUPLES CONSIDERING MISSION LEADERSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA AND INFORMATION THE MISSION AGENCY SHOULD DISCLOSE	231
REFERENCE LIST	237
VITA	244

PREFACE

The following personal story did not appear in the original version of this thesis project, but was written and added later, on the advice of the thesis defence committee.

After successful pastoral ministry with my husband in North America, we each earned Masters of Divinity in Cross-Cultural Studies, taking different courses in order to have a broad range between us. Based on our joint thesis, which was a feasibility study initiated at the request of our senior denominational mission leader, we were appointed as their first missionaries to Russia. After achieving early proficiency in the language, we both taught in a Christian university and were given field leadership responsibilities. At the end of our first term we were nominated by our peers and appointed by our senior denominational mission leaders to lead the team of forty missionaries when we returned from furlough for our second term in Russia. Although my husband alone bore the field leader title, following precedents we were both active in this ministry, based out of offices in our large mission home, where we also ran a guest flat. With our two young children in tow, we traveled to visit each member of our team and their families, conducted yearly field forums and retreats, and hosted many short-term mission teams and visiting leaders from our denomination in North America. We also acted as advisors to Russian church leaders and their spouses for a network of fifty churches with which our denominational mission was partnered. When time permitted, we accepted

invitations to speak in Russian churches and at their leadership conferences, retreats, graduations, etc.

Our second furlough was extended in order for my husband to complete a PhD in Intercultural Studies, for which he had received a full scholarship from the seminary. In addition to his studies, we spoke together in churches almost every weekend. In the second year we also accepted the role of district mission leader for two church districts of our denomination, with the understanding that I would perform most of the tasks, on account of my husband's full-time studies. During this period of time a former professor of mine had recommended me to the Arrow Leadership Program, for which I was selected out of 300 applicants and was encouraged by my denominational leaders to enroll on the doctoral track. After two years I completed Arrow, and the president of our denomination offered to write a letter of recommendation to Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary on my behalf, for acceptance into the Doctor of Ministry in Leadership.

During the third year of our extended furlough, anticipating our return to the field, my husband and I were sent as representatives from our denomination to conduct a probe trip to Kazakhstan. In spite of doubts raised in our report as to the advisability of our denominational mission joining some five-hundred other evangelical missionaries already established in the main city, we were officially appointed to relocate there in order to prepare for a new team sent from our mission. As believers in constituted authority we started making arrangements for our belongings to be shipped from Russia to Kazakhstan, prepared a video presentation and message, and began presenting this new venture in churches every weekend. Aware of our re-assignment but feeling led otherwise by God,

our senior denominational mission leader asked my husband to assume a new position as his assistant at the head office of our denomination, located in North America.

During the week they gave us to decide, the senior mission leader and his wife had us to their home and told us that my husband's position would involve both of us, that my active participation would be welcomed, and that I would be invited to participate on the international leadership team, which met several times a year at various places in the world with our regional leadership couples. The mission leader's wife informed me of a policy that had been put into place by the current denominational president, which restricted spouses of those working at the headquarters from holding official positions there. She also gently warned me that since I would no longer be an employee, I would therefore lose my missionary status and denominational credentials. Sensing my hesitancy, the mission leader assured me that these issues would not necessarily come to bear on my case. He did not see any reason why I could not continue in the role as district mission leader, since I worked from my home office, connected to two church district offices, and not at the national headquarters.

As for my husband, during this same visit the mission leader said that he would intentionally mentor and groom him, in order for him to take over his role as senior denominational mission leader when he retired in a few years. Although he admitted that this decision would not ultimately be his, he assured us that his recommendation would hold a lot of weight. As long as evaluations were good, which he fully expected based on my husband's leadership capabilities, he saw no reason why he would not be appointed to this role. We asked if he had the denominational president's blessing in this (we knew

this man from when he stayed in our home during a visit to Russia – at the end of which time he had commended us for our fruitful ministry and capable leadership, and also encouraged my husband to pursue the PhD in Intercultural Studies). The mission leader assured us that he had consulted the president and received his approval.

Based on what the senior mission leader had told us, and on prayer and consultation with respected peers and mentors in our denominational network, my husband accepted the position. From the initial announcement, and in the months and years which followed, many of our colleagues from around the world affirmed him for becoming the new ‘young blood’ in our denominational leadership, and expressed their support for him someday taking over the senior mission leadership position. We felt this role held great promise for expanding each of our ministries, in order to be change agents in a mission agency that, from our perspective as missionaries over the course of a decade, needed further development in the areas of communication with the fields, the efficient handling of mission finance, and missionary member care.

In the month after my husband accepted the position, we were focused on re-routing our belongings from Russia back to North America, adjusting to (and helping our children to accept) more permanent residency there. For the next three months leading up to the start of his new role my husband was finishing his PhD dissertation, while I continued as district mission leader. However, upon inquiry to the denominational vice-president under whose authority the district mission leader roles were in the process of being transitioned, I discovered that I would *not* be eligible to continue when my husband started his new position. Instead of assigning missionaries on furlough as district mission

leaders, these roles would now become salaried positions out of the denominational headquarters and, as such, the policy on spouses would disqualify me. I appealed in writing to this vice-president, based on what the senior mission leader had suggested for my continuing in this role, but was informed in no uncertain terms that I would be finished as district mission leader when my husband was done, the day before he started his new position at the denominational headquarters.

Amidst unpacking our belongings from Russia, the reality of my situation began to sink in. I realized that it would mean the loss of my ministry roles, both overseas and in North America, and the revocation of my denominational credentials (for which I had worked hard to attain as a single woman in ministry). Although I was married to one of the supposed up-and-coming denominational leaders and would therefore be encouraged to travel with him and perform representational duties by attending denominational conferences and meetings, I would not be allowed to vote on denominational or mission issues, or participate during elections.

On the advice of leadership partners in the Arrow Leadership Program, I appealed in writing to the denominational president and his associates, requesting that along with my husband I be granted the status of “missionary on special assignment” or at least “missionary on study leave” since I was about to enrol in a doctoral program – thereby retaining my credentials until the matter could be reviewed. After follow-up letters sent by me, and several verbal inquiries through my husband, I found out third-person that the president would grant me the latter, meaning that I would be placed on “leave of absence” status and could retain my credentials as long as I was studying (however, before I

finished my degree and without further consultation with me this status was later revoked, but I was not informed of it until three months after it had come into effect).

When my husband settled into his new position, and ministry opportunities arose which he felt I was suited for, most of his suggestions for my involvement were met with resistance from the member care coordinator, who had grown into the position without formal education or missionary experience and who now seemed to be carefully guarding the territory. But what reason would this person have to trust my abilities and expertise? Except for one or two people, most at the denominational headquarters had never seen me in pastoral ministry prior to leaving for the mission field, as a field leader and writer in Russia, speaking in churches during furlough, or leading seminars as a church district mission leader in North America. In any case, it seemed there was simply no longer room for me in the denominational mission enterprise, since other individuals were already being contracted for the roles which I could fill, even though my husband made it clear that my services would come on a voluntary basis with no expectation of remuneration.

I traveled with my husband to denominational and mission functions, but in spite of his efforts to include me, since I was no longer an employee I had no official status, role or function, other than to stand as his ‘arm ornament’ and perform my representational duties as ‘third lady’ in the organization. So I focused on developing relationships with the missionaries and missionary candidates, offering informal member care, prayer and advice based on my decade as a missionary – having learned the Russian language, served in full-time ministry and involved in field leadership, while birthing and raising young children in a developing nation. I was also home educating my children (as

an increasing number of them were opting to do) and could therefore offer advice and resources in this area.

The senior mission leader's wife, whom I had asked to be my ministry mentor for the Arrow Leadership Program, tried her best to help me through the transition, although it soon became apparent that as a spouse of the senior mission leader she was struggling with the same realities. She invited me to come and assist with monthly denominational mailings, which appeared to be the only avenue for spouses to contribute – a far cry from providing theological education for pastors on the mission field, as each of us had done.

During the first international leadership meetings that I attended, I was surprised when the senior mission leader clearly made the distinction to the team that his wife and I were invited guests and not official members. Although I was careful to say very little in the first day of meetings, on the second day when the denominational president would be joining us the senior mission leader's wife coached me that although it was generally okay to speak in these meetings, since I was not an official member I should remain silent when the president was there. On subsequent occasions when I did speak, the senior mission leader encouraged me after the meetings for my insightful input to the team. But when it came time for my husband to conduct missionary candidate interviews and he wanted me to be in on them, he was met with resistance again from the member care coordinator, apparently representing the regional leadership couples who, on account of my not being an official member of the international leadership team, did not feel I should be present in those interviews.

I was receiving mixed messages and was confused by the precarious position in which I found myself. While others on the international leadership team could sense my struggle (most were colleagues I had known from before) some made comments which highlighted the fact that I was no longer one of them. They seemed to pity me, which only added to my disillusionment. Although the regional leaders worked as couples (with the familiar partners-in-ministry ethos we had experienced in field leadership), once our husbands were promoted, ironically the senior mission leader's wife and I seemed to be placed in a different category, separated by corporate structure from the ministry and daily life of the organization. We felt like outsiders among former colleagues, like visitors at the head office of the company we used to work for. It was as if we had been 'let go' by our employer but, in spite of our disappointment, since our husbands had been promoted to executive positions there, we were occasionally invited to visit our former workplace and have lunch with our old colleagues and boss – not a very healthy practice for our self esteem. Meanwhile, when our husbands commuted to work at the office each day, we were left at home to face our transition and re-entry struggles alone, wondering why we felt the way we did and trying to carve out a new life for ourselves.

During the first international leadership team meetings I also discovered that, due to having no credentials, the senior mission leader's wife and even the president's wife also did not have voting privileges at denominational meetings, although their husbands did. It was these women's representational duty to attend alongside their husbands but, different from most of their colleagues around them, they had to keep their hands at their sides and their pens in their pockets when important decisions were being made.

Although the senior mission leader's wife had many decades of experience as a missionary and field leader's spouse, and had much insight into mission and denominational issues, she remained mostly silent during meetings and busied herself with handwork. While I observed her, I struggled to come to terms with my own lesser nebulous role in the mission agency – of which I had thought up until then that I would still play an active part in.

Obviously, things were not turning out as my husband and I had expected. The lines between employee and spouse were more clearly drawn than we had ever imagined, coming from our dual leadership roles in this organization on the mission field. Both of us were grieving the loss of my resource to the mission and the personal loss for us as a couple, having always enjoyed and felt most effective and fruitful in ministry together. Our children were also experiencing and expressing grief over the loss of our missionary life and ministry together as a family – since the mission agency offered even less for them than for spouses, in terms of a welcoming family-oriented ethos and atmosphere for children of mission leaders in North America. Unless we pushed the envelope and introduced opportunities for our children's involvement at the mission headquarters and during travels (which were also met with resistance) our children remained totally cut off from the mission and its work. This was also true for other leaders at this denominational office, amplified by the fact that most of us could not afford to live close to the headquarters and opted to commute from other cities instead. All the while, even as my children and I felt disqualified, my husband was receiving accolades from the senior

mission leader, denominational vice presidents and other colleagues who worked at the head office and in the denomination – for the work to which he seemed so well suited.

As for me, it became apparent that I had hit the proverbial ‘glass ceiling’ as a married woman in a hierarchical male-driven corporate organizational structure, headed by a president who seemed to support women in ministry but offered limited opportunities for their involvement in denominational or mission leadership. No executive level leadership positions have been granted to women in this denomination, including the local churches, many of which still do not have women as elders, although for over a decade they have been permitted to if they so choose. The issues of women in leadership and the ordination of women have not been resolved in this mission-turned-church-denomination, the two of which have functioned inextricably enmeshed for most of the past century.

One of the women who worked at the denominational headquarters informed me that when they were looking for a new vice-president of finance and she suggested a highly qualified female, they responded that it would not work out for situations where denominational leaders had to travel together. Similarly, when I asked the president for the reason behind his policy on spouses not being permitted to work at the headquarters, he said it was nothing against women, but rather a logistical matter related to spouses leaving their posts during official travel with their husbands. I found out later that there had been an issue with at least one of the spouses who had worked there, but instead of dealing with the individual case(s) toward a mutually acceptable arrangement, the president had simply made a blanket policy. It seemed from these examples that the

exclusion of women from leadership at the headquarters of this denomination was based on the inconvenience it would cause to accommodate them. However, it begged the question of a deeper agenda, since women in ministry and leadership have been repressed in many spheres as this denomination has strayed from its founder's own practices.

Nevertheless, for two years my husband and I held onto the hope that the senior mission leadership position he was being groomed for would give him expanded influence, among other things to change the paradigm of how mission leaders' wives are viewed at the headquarters – until he was informed by the denominational president of his having told the senior mission leader right from the start to make sure my husband knew he would never be eligible for that role. His stated reason was that my husband was too young and inexperienced, and would therefore not have the respect of the people. He further asserted that my husband was overqualified for his current role and that he would never have advised him to take it in the first place. After a major international relocation for our family and two years of ministry investment at this headquarters (unfortunately labeled a “toxic work environment” by physicians treating its staff) this encounter was the ‘final straw’ in sending my previously healthy husband (who had developed physical symptoms shortly after starting at the office and confronting leadership and financial issues) into full-blown burnout, later diagnosed as chronic fatigue syndrome.

In light of excellent evaluations and commendations for all that my husband had accomplished in his two years at the headquarters, I too struggled to come to terms with this new information. It meant that our decision to accept the position in the first place had been made based on incomplete information – likely withheld due to the expectation

that the president would soon be voted out. For my own part, through counseling I had already come to terms with the fact that when my husband had been promoted I had effectually been demoted (actually ‘fired’, as I was unwillingly dropped from the payroll). All the while, the very people disqualifying me had expressed admiration for my fruitful ministry on the field and support for my further studies, including the president. Having been called by God to missions as a child, affirmed in my natural gifts (academic, teaching, speaking) and spiritual gifts (apostolic, prophetic, pastoral), the above situation caused a significant theological crisis for me in the areas of my calling and the usage of my spiritual gifts – especially in relation to women and, more specifically, wives of mission agency leaders who also happen to possess leadership gifts.

My unfortunate personal experiences as the trailing spouse of a mission leader were the initial impetus for the thesis project you are about to read. Over a period of three years I also discovered that there were other women in similar predicaments, across denominational and interdenominational mission agency lines. Although I was reluctant to take up their cause for fear that it may be seen as a personal vendetta, mentors in the Arrow Leadership Program and the Doctor of Ministry in Leadership at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary convinced me that this was a leadership issue which needed to be addressed. Through their exhortations the Lord called me to lead the way in making these women’s voices heard for the first time in the evangelical mission community. As for my own voice in the matter, for objectivity I did *not* include my story in the original version submitted for the defence of this thesis, however, those directing the study strongly advised me to write the preface which you have just read. It must be noted that the study itself was based on research gleaned from other trailing spouses in mission leadership.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Without the support of my family, as a wife and mother I could not have attempted such a project. My husband, Dr. Douglas P. Tiessen, has been my greatest fan, constantly cheering me along in the process and lending his expertise in research methodology, project structure, computer research analysis, and formatting. My sons, Joshua (12) and Zachary (11), whom my husband and I are privileged to home educate, have amazed us in their growing capacity for independent learning during the course of my studies. My mother, Marjorie Cairns (the speediest typist I know) spent countless hours with a dictaphone transcribing all the interviews, and later proofread my entire thesis project. She also stepped in on many occasions to help with our boys, who always enjoy grandma-homeschooling (“Price Is Right” math, “Wheel of Fortune” spelling, and “Jeopardy” to cover all the rest!) My immediate family, relatives and close friends have provided much encouragement and practical assistance, freeing me to complete this project. I am deeply grateful to them for making my educational journey possible.

Jeremiah 29:11 says, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” As a newly married couple we made these words our ‘life verse’. I have clung to them throughout the recent difficult years, as the Lord graciously provided me with a healthy environment of encouragement and hope through the Arrow Leadership Program and the Doctor of Ministry in Leadership at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (GCTS).

I would like to thank Dr. Raymur and Viola Downey, now retired from mission agency leadership in North America; Dr. Duncan Westwood of International Health Management; Dr. Carson and Brenda Pue, and the professors and students (especially my peer mentor group) from the Arrow Leadership Program North American Class of 2005; Dr. Steven Klipowicz, the professors and my fellow students at GCTS. All of these brothers and sisters in Christ have been used by God in powerful ways to validate my experiences, convey value and build confidence back into my life.

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Rhonda Pruitt of Columbia International University, who was recommended to me through our mutual colleague, Dr. Duncan Westwood. Upon learning of my research project she graciously agreed to be my second reader because she saw the need for such a resource in the mission community. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Laura Mae Gardner, who better than anyone else seemed to really ‘get it’ – her willingness to share her papers on mission administrators and their families, and to support my further research in this area has been a great encouragement.

Lastly, I would like to express appreciation for the participants who were brave enough to speak about their experiences and offer recommendations – without them this thesis project and its research would not have been possible. Through the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this study, as spouses of mission leaders their voices are now being heard for the first time in the mission community. May our efforts together make a difference for the women who follow after us, toward the better stewardship of their commodity in mission, to the glory of God and the completion of the Great Commission in our world.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the past and present ministry experiences of trailing spouses of evangelical mission agency leaders in North America, to determine whether they are a well-stewarded commodity or a lost resource in mission. Across evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission agency lines, in the past few decades the utilization of women in ministry and leadership (both single and married) has been growing on the mission field. Missionary member care, including transition care and counseling, has increasingly been made available for missionaries, retirees and those who have been repatriated for other reasons. However, it appears that one group of individuals has been inadvertently overlooked and under utilized – namely the trailing spouses of those called home from the field to mission leadership positions in North America. Through in-depth qualitative interviews representing various evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission agencies, for the first time ever these spouses were given an official voice to speak to the evangelical mission community. Using computer assisted document analysis, the transcripts from these interviews were examined, and findings were reported in fifteen categories under three major headings, from which conclusions and recommendations were drawn. The expected outcome is that mission agencies will be aware of this problem and better steward the valuable human resource found in spouses of mission leaders.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Over the past few decades, evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission agencies in North America have become increasingly aware of the need to provide physical and emotional care for their missionary personnel, both when they are overseas and when they are on furlough in North America. Many of the larger organizations have specialists in member care who facilitate medical and pastoral care. When needed, they also arrange professional counseling for their personnel and children.

Following the example of multi-national corporations, in the past decade the specialized area of member care referred to as transition care has been developed and implemented for missionaries to aid in their many transitions – for those moving to the field, returning for furlough, and for those being redeployed from one field to another. To a lesser degree, retirees and those who take leave of absence or resign from their mission (i.e. for health, educational or family reasons) have also been offered transition care and counseling. These are positive steps forward in the field of missionary member care.

The Problem

There is, however, a category of missionary personnel in transition that has been inadvertently neglected, mainly due to the relatively small number of individuals affected

in each mission agency. These are the missionary spouses of those who are called home from the mission field to take positions of leadership at the head offices of their mission agencies. While there may only be, at the most, a few such individuals in any one mission agency at any one given time, a cross-section of several mission agencies shows that this phenomenon, referred to in the social sciences as “the trailing spouse” (Hester 2006, 1), actually affects a significant number of people. Almost all of these individuals are women, each of them veritable islands, alone in their mission agencies with few around them who recognize their unique challenges and, for some, their private pain. As those who felt they were called to be missionaries, in addition to general transition and re-entry issues faced by returning missionaries, many of them struggle with their identity in Christ and their often-nebulous role as wives in mission leadership with their husbands. Are these trailing spouses of mission leaders an effectively stewarded commodity, or are they a lost resource in the mission community?

The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and perspectives of individuals who, as a result of the career change of their spouse, have become a trailing spouse in mission leadership. In accordance with their missionary call, education and spiritual gifts, these spouses ministered in various capacities on the mission field, some parallel to the ministry of their husband and some in partnership with their husband. In so doing, they were fulfilling what they felt God had called them to do, in terms of personal participation in world evangelization. While ultimately their identity was in Christ, they

enjoyed a clearly defined status as a missionary and multiple ministry roles or assignments on the mission field. In the transition to their new reality as a spouse of a mission leader in North America, many of them struggle with the loss of organizational status which in turn affects their identity, role, value in the organization and opportunities for significant involvement in ministry to fulfill their calling and use their God-given gifts. Deprivation in these areas precipitates a significant deeper crisis in terms of their personal, social and biblical/theological framework, which shapes their interpretation of the transition and re-entry issues and influences the degree to which they are able to make adjustments for resolution, fulfilment and longevity in their new reality.

In order to answer the main research question of this thesis, five sub-questions were examined: 1) What biblical and theological issues shape the study of the trailing spouse in mission leadership? 2) What bodies of literature inform this study? 3) What are the experiences of trailing spouses of mission leaders and how do they adjust to their new reality in order to reach satisfactory resolution? 4) What conclusions can be drawn from these findings? 5) Using the conceptual framework of missionary transition and re-entry, what resources and recommendations can be offered to mission agencies as a result of this study?

The goals of this thesis project, in light of the above, were to heighten awareness in the mission community for the transition and re-entry issues of trailing spouses in mission leadership, to highlight the need for mission agencies to provide transition and re-entry care for these individuals, and to examine evangelical mission agency cultures, structures, policies and practices in relation to their effect on former-missionary spouses

of mission leaders – toward the more effective stewardship of this valuable human resource.

The Procedure

The methodology which was used for this exploratory study was a qualitative, descriptive document analysis, following theorists Gall, Borg and Gall (1996). The researcher networked with former-missionary spouses of mission leaders from various mission agencies in North America to invite participation in one-hour interviews, either in person or by telephone. The interviews represented a limited cross-section of six evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission agencies, based out of national offices in North America. All of the individuals shared the common experience of having actively served on foreign mission fields before their spouses were called into mission leadership in North America. A generational cross-section was also represented, ranging in age from thirties to sixties. Due to the fact that no male trailing spouses of mission leaders were found to participate in this study, it was further limited to the experiences of wives of mission leaders.

These in-depth interviews were audio recorded and the findings were based on transcripts from the recordings. Through computer assisted document analysis using Nvivo 2.0 (Nvivo), the researcher used a chronological and thematic approach, whereby themes arose after reading and re-reading the transcripts, before producing actual findings. The findings were reported in narrative form.

The Prognosis

The end result of this study was a body of concrete data, from which findings were reported to highlight the transition and re-entry issues for trailing spouses of mission leaders. Based on an analysis of the findings, conclusions were drawn and answers were given to the main research question and the five sub-questions of this study. As stated earlier, the goal of this project was to heighten awareness in the mission community, such that mission agencies would understand the transition and re-entry dynamics that face the spouses of those whom they call home from the mission field to take up leadership positions in their organizations. To aid them in this process, specific recommendations and resources were provided. Recommendations were also made for further research.

A byproduct of this research project was to encourage former-missionary spouses of mission leaders by giving them a voice to speak, which for most of them constituted the first significant opportunity to contribute their experiences in this little-known arena. The process of reading about the project, pondering, praying, discussing the interview questions with their husbands, being heard through the interview, and reading the findings and conclusions of this project actually furnished some needed member care to a group of individuals who have been largely, although inadvertently, ignored in the evangelical mission community.

In addition, other trailing spouses of mission leaders who find themselves in this situation, both at present and those who will contemplate such transitions in the future, now have a resource to deepen their understanding of the issues and challenges these individuals face. They can read concrete examples of how other spouses of mission

leaders have or have not successfully adapted to their new reality, and the factors which helped or prevented these individuals from doing so. This should aid in furnishing better transition, re-entry and satisfactory resolution for spouses of those promoted to mission leadership in North America in the future.

Lastly, for individuals and couples in the process of choosing a mission agency (especially those who may be potential candidates for future leadership roles), an understanding of mission agency cultures – including philosophy and structure of leadership, and the resulting atmosphere for women and wives – will aid in choosing an organization that will be the best fit for them.

The following chapters form the body of this study: Chapter two examines the biblical and theological framework that serves as the theoretical backdrop for the study. Chapter three extends the theological discussion as it has developed throughout mission history up to the new millennium, and also draws on literature from other related fields. Chapter four outlines the project design, including an explanation of data collection and analysis. Chapter five includes the actual findings drawn directly from the interviews. Chapter six sets forth conclusions from the findings, followed by recommendations and practical resources for use in mission agencies as they work with couples considering future roles in mission leadership and those already serving in mission leadership in North America. Lastly, appendices to the study, a reference list and vita are included at the end of this thesis project.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this chapter was to review biblical and theological literature pertinent to constructing a theoretical framework for understanding the problem set forth in this project. The subject of women in ministry immediately came to the foreground, as did such themes as calling and vocation, identity in Christ and the use of spiritual gifts in the body of believers. These themes were examined in light of the biblical texts commonly associated with them, under the following headings: Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, Theological Atmosphere and Theological Crisis.

Old Testament

God created humankind - male and female - in his own image. The mutual endowment of God's image suggests neither male headship nor female submission (Gen. 1:26-27). The Hebrew term used in Genesis 2:18 in reference to the woman is *ezer kenegdo*. The noun *ezer* occurs twenty-one times in the Old Testament, in many cases in parallel to words that clearly denote strength or power (Deut. 33:26, 29). Together with *kenegdo* the term was translated into Old English as "help-meet," which devolved into the traditional understanding that the woman was to be his assistant or "helpmate," on account of the word "mate" being so close to the Old English word "meet." But this term in its original language meant "fit to" or "corresponding to" the man, as reflected in

modern translations. What God had intended was to make a “power/strength” for the man who would in every way “correspond to him” or even “equal to him,” as some Hebrew and Jewish scholars suggest (Freedman 1983, 56-58). It is also of interest to note that this term was used in several other places in the Old Testament to refer to God, specifically to God’s Spirit who is the helper of humankind (Ps.46:1; Ps.10:14).

The man and woman together were charged with the responsibility of caring for God’s creation (Gen. 1:28-31). Unfortunately, this cohesive and mutually beneficial relationship was affected by humankind’s fall into sin, resulting in the age-old conflict over male dominance and female submission in the human race (Gen. 3). This stands in direct contradiction to God’s originally stated plan, and is not a pattern which he intended or endorsed for man and woman at creation.

After the fall, the patriarchal system gradually developed, and man’s dominance over woman largely continued until modern times. In perusing the Old Testament it is obvious that cultic leadership was the sphere of men, with women playing only supporting roles (Ex. 38:8; 2 Kings 23:7; Ezra 2:64-65; Ps. 68:24-25). As it has been aptly described, “Israel’s failure to employ women in priestly roles probably had more to do with kinship structures than with theology. Contrary to the practice of most of their neighbors, priestly competence was a function of genealogy in Israel, and genealogy was a matter of patrilineal descent” (Nelson 1993, 97).

Ironically, as an exception to the rule in this male-oriented society, women occasionally took on roles of leadership, for example as prophets and, in the case of Esther, as a queen. In addition to leaders such as Moses, Joseph and David, women the

likes of Esther and Deborah were examples of female figures in the Bible who took on “paradigmatic proportions as representative figures in Israel’s historiography” (Laniak 1998, 175). Apparently Yahweh, the God of Israel, did not designate gender or marital status as the exclusive requirement for eligibility and usefulness in the leadership of his kingdom on earth. He thus called both men and women into positions of influence, as circumstances and personalities dictated, throughout the history of his people.

New Testament

Turning to the New Testament, many were brought up to assume that Paul’s ‘prohibition’ texts were basic on the issue of the ordination of women (France 1995, 94). To be sure, these texts taken out of their cultural context have long been employed to disqualify women from general and specific areas of leadership in the church. For centuries, Old Testament examples of women in leadership, such as the ones cited above, were glossed over as situational, exceptional, or entirely irrelevant to the subject. Similarly, the examples of Jesus and his followers, in relation to women, were all but ignored, in deference to the didactic Pauline texts of the New Testament.

While Jesus neither articulated nor practiced a revolutionary overthrow of the deeply embedded patriarchal Jewish culture, by his example and through his ministry he did open the door to new roles and new freedom for women to participate in the advance of the gospel (Stassen and Gushee 2003, 319). He called both men and women to follow him and become his disciples. It has been noted that:

Neither in word, deed or attitude did Jesus view women to be inferior and subordinate. Despite Jewish law, he respected women fully. Although Jewish

males in their prayers thanked God that they had not been made a woman, Jesus not only taught women, he included them in his larger circle of disciples and chose them to be the first proclaimers of his resurrection. (Patterson 1989, 65)

It appears that Jesus ‘pushed the envelope’ of the social order as far as he could in his cultural context, in attempt to restore women to their pre-fall position at creation, which was one of significance and equality in God’s kingdom. Although the status of women in the Old Testament was oppressed, by his words and actions Jesus condemned and corrected this situation (Swartley 1983, 158). In so doing, “in the ongoing practice of his ministry, Jesus shattered numerous taboos related to male-female contact and association” (Stassen and Gushee 2003, 318). By thus placing the example and teachings of Jesus back into a central position, it opens up the possibilities beyond the few Pauline prohibitions to a “trajectory of thought and practice developing through Scripture, and arguably pointing beyond itself to the fuller outworking of God’s ultimate purpose in Christ in ways which the first-century situation did not yet allow” (France 1995, 95).

The outcome of Jesus’ radical ministry was that Lydia could host the church in her home (Acts 16:14, 40) and Priscilla could minister alongside her husband Aquila as a church leader instructing young leaders through a teaching ministry (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Rom. 16:3; I Cor. 16:19; 2 Ti. 4:19). Priscilla’s role in teaching and leadership was perceived as normal, such that it did not necessitate special comment or explanation by the writer of Acts. Her role seems to have been accepted and even expected, rather than extraordinary or an exception to the rule (Kraft and Crossman, 2). Likewise, it is not uncommon today to find Aquila-Priscilla couples travelling throughout the world teaching pastors and leaders – certainly among missionaries there have been many

excellent examples of couples serving together, whose obvious anointing for ministry has been received with appreciation by their students, both male and female.

Those whose identity was in Christ simply came to be known as “Christians,” and it seems that they participated in the growth of the fledgling church without regard to their gender. In his letters to the churches, Paul called attention to his many female co-workers, in spite of the cultural context where it would actually not have been prudent to do so. In fact, Romans chapter sixteen mentions twenty-seven people, ten of whom were women, a significant part of the early church’s ministries – including Phoebe who was a deacon and Junia who was referred to as an “apostle” – occupying positions of leadership (Swartley 1983, 174). In reference to these early missionaries, “when we review the surprising number of New Testament references to women and the missionary apostolate, we soon become convinced that the early Church could not have grown as rapidly as it did without their constant assistance” (Glasser 1978, 405). Neither could the church worldwide have grown as it has, without the many female missionaries who have answered the call to ‘go into all the world and preach the gospel’. This subject will be further explored in the following chapter of this project.

Just as at Pentecost the Holy Spirit fell upon both men and women as the Old Testament had promised (Acts 2:17-18; Joel 2:28-29), the criterion for who may use the gifts of the Spirit to further the kingdom of God was to become the whole body of Christ, with specialization directed by spiritual giftedness, rather than by gender (Stassen and Gushee 2003, 322-323). All of Christ’s followers have their identity in him and are called to do his work on earth in accordance with the gifts which his Spirit has bestowed on each of them. The call is common to all, while the specific vocations vary.

Paul's declaration in Galatians 3:28, "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus," is seen as the capstone for recognizing women in ministry (Patterson 1989, 66).

Aptly expressed by the World Evangelical Fellowship Theological Commission:

Christ redeemed woman and man from sin and its consequences experienced in gender roles in the fallen creation. Thus in the body of Christ there is a new equality and a new reciprocity of woman and man. The outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh and the distribution of spiritual gifts without regard to gender at Pentecost and in the early church gives evidence of this new equality and reciprocity. The Spirit can and does empower men and women to new roles not based on gender but on spiritual gifts. Equality of status thus expresses itself in equality of function. (Nicholls 1997, 35)

Likewise, in the passages that contain lists of spiritual gifts, there is a noticeable absence of gender categorizations assigned for each (Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11-13). In terms of church life and work, gender differences are not thereby dissolved, but gender as a determinant of spiritual gifts and resulting roles fades from view in light of edification in the church and the massive goal of world evangelization. Christians must be free to exercise their God-given spiritual gifts without restriction. Those whom God calls and equips to lead, both male and female, must be permitted to do so for the church to fulfill its task (1 Cor. 12:7) (Guthrie 2000, 360). A focus on the body of Christ and the priesthood of believers sees women for the "helper" they were originally meant to be – not men *over* women, nor women *over* men, but rather men and women each bringing their unique strengths and spiritual gifts to the arena of ministry and leadership in the church.

Church History

Just as Jesus came to heal and restore broken, distorted relationships caused by sin and the fall, the church ought to demonstrate God's original male-female relationship of mutuality and shared service. Both maleness and femaleness should be represented in all parts of the church, including mission agencies (Patterson 1989, 66). Of course, as in many other areas Jesus' model and that of the early church have not always been followed, and throughout most of church history the church has actually been more a reflection of the fallen relationship between men and women than of the restored bride that is spoken of in the New Testament. While the larger subject of church history goes beyond the scope of this study, the history of the evangelical mission movement will be traced in the following chapter. Just as God has throughout the centuries called both men and women to lead the way in the advance of the gospel and the establishment of his church, missionary women continue to be an integral part of the mission movement worldwide, increasingly taking on positions of responsibility in mission leadership, both on foreign fields and on the home front.

Theological Atmosphere

In the past, many of the outstanding women in mission were single missionaries. However, over the last century and especially in the past few decades married women (formerly known merely as missionary wives) have established themselves as missionaries in their own right, often taking on ministry and leadership responsibilities either with their husbands or on their own, in accordance with their gifts and abilities.

The norm, in terms of a marriage and ministry ethos in evangelical missions today, is generally one of partnership in mission. Married couples leading missionary teams is common, deemed as helpful by missionaries and healthy from a member care perspective.

Those who have been raised in the North American context over the past few decades, especially post-moderns, are for the most part comfortable with men and women in leadership, and actually prefer this over the past male-dominated field chairman era. Most young, seminary-educated females, both single and married, are no longer willing to tolerate sexual stereotypes, which prevented women from the full usage of their gifts and abilities in the past. But it will not be as easy for evangelical mission agencies to change from a male-dominated hierarchical view of the role of women to an egalitarian one. In the meantime, many have settled for a “complementarian” view, which in theory claims to be somewhere in the middle but in practice still tends toward the former. It is true that, “attitudes and expectations on all sides are greatly influenced by theology and by cultural traditions that have become so entwined with theology that it is difficult to tell which it is” (Bowers 1985, 359). According to the increasing number of evangelical egalitarians, “male leaders will have to check their theological and biblical proof texts. Rather than focussing on 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 and 1 Timothy 2:11,12 as transcultural, absolutely normative texts, they will need to look at the overall teaching of Scripture in light of both balance and consistency in regard to women’s full participation in the ministries of the church” (Patterson 1989, 68).

The issue of ordination for women still rages on in some evangelical denominational debates, but the overall status of women in regard to leadership in church

and mission has been raised to a new level. Accordingly it has been stated that, “considerable progress has been made in recent years in the proliferation of roles made available to women in mission ... in general, restrictions on women’s roles are being lifted” (Jackson 1980, 200). Although that statement was penned over twenty-five years ago, sadly it is still only a future hope for women in many conservative evangelical churches and mission agencies. “In many mission organizations this great resource remains largely untapped as far as leadership is concerned” (Lewis and Gardner, 2001). This appears to hold true for spouses (mostly women) who are married to mission leaders. While women are gradually occupying more positions of leadership at the head offices of evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission agencies, the number of married couples able to extend their overseas ‘partnership in mission’ ethos to the North American mission leadership context appears to be much fewer.

Theological Crisis

In the corporate atmosphere of some of these mission agency headquarters, individuals are known by their title or position, and by whether they are an official employee, a volunteer, or merely the wife of a mission leader with no defined role other than to support her husband’s ministry. If, as stated earlier, gifts of leadership and administration are given to men and women alike, then to deny a woman development and use of this God-given gift would seem to be counterproductive to the furtherance of the kingdom (Lewis and Gardner, 2001). Unfortunately, in many instances this subtle denial appears to be the norm for trailing spouses of mission leaders, thereby becoming

the new reality often not understood by the couple until after their repatriation to North America. These spouses suffer quietly with their losses and grief, amidst role and identity confusion, not wanting to jeopardize their husband's position. Although they have been assigned a vicarious role of honor through their husband's promotion to mission leadership, many of these women feel dishonored and even disqualified from the daily life and work of their mission agency. They struggle to reconcile this new reality with their missionary call and the ministry they had on the mission field.

Along with transition and re-entry issues, the above situation creates a significant theological crisis for these women, many of whom were called and gifted by God to be missionaries long before they met their husbands. What is a woman to do with her own 'Macedonian Call' when her husband is called to mission leadership in North America? Can she extend his call and vocation to encompass her own, living it out vicariously through him? What about her gifts for ministry and the partnership in leadership which many of these women enjoyed alongside their husbands on the mission field? (Is it possible that the gifts and abilities of these spouses augmented the leadership of their husbands in such a way as to make them eligible for promotion to mission leadership?) If, due to an ethos based on hierarchical evangelical ecclesiology or on an outmoded secular corporate structure, some of these former-missionary spouses are deprived of significant contribution in ministry related to world evangelization, how are they to cope with such role deprivation? From a Christian organizational point of view, what is the loss in terms of stewardship of human resources in these gifted spouses? These questions are answered through the findings and conclusions of this study.

The theological motivation for conducting such a study can be summed up in the following rhetorical question regarding women in ministry: “As members of the body of Christ, are we not called to look out for one another’s interests, and if certain ministries are denied to God’s people, should it not concern all of us?” (Keener 1992, 1-2).

Summary

A brief look at the role of women in the Old Testament and New Testament, and in church history (more fully developed in the following chapter in relation to mission history), has revealed the theological atmosphere and the resulting theological crisis for spouses of mission leaders. These aspects contributed to the construction of a biblical and theological framework, which formed the backdrop for the following chapters. The questions raised thus far in the study were examined in detail, looking first at the related literature available to date through the topical lenses of this project, then at the case studies of ten spouses of mission leaders, many of whom have found themselves in a rather precarious personal and theological position.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter was to view the literature pertinent to constructing a theoretical framework, in order to understand the realities faced by spouses of mission leaders today. To accomplish this, three bodies of literature related to the subject were reviewed under the following headings: Mission, Member Care, and Leadership.

Mission

The literature on mission led the researcher to consider two aspects in order to increase understanding of the problem presented in this project. These are delineated in the following manner: women in mission, married women in mission.

Women in Mission

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there are several excellent books on the history of women in mission from the early church onwards. In the Catholic church of the middle ages, of special note were nuns, who worked tirelessly for the cause of advancing the church worldwide. In their article entitled, “Women in Mission,” Kraft and Crossman state:

Women who chose to remain single, serve God, and live the cloistered life were given the opportunity through the accepted ecclesiastical framework to proclaim the Gospel. In the Catholic tradition, priests, bishops and nuns built churches and hospitals, and founded schools and orphanages in order to establish the faith. (Kraft and Crossman 1999, 14)

Missiologist Arthur F. Glasser, in his article entitled, “One-half the Church – and Mission,” relays how, during the time of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century, women were driven out of the convents.

By their rendering all sodality structures invalid – which contributed so grievously to the absence of Protestant missionary outreach for more than 200 years – the reformers also subjected women to the confining perspective that their only recognized vocation was marriage. With the dissolution of the nunneries women lost their last chance of churchly service outside the narrow circle of husband, home and children. (Glasser 1978, 407)

An insightful article by Virginia Patterson, called “Women in Missions: facing the 21st Century” (Patterson 1989), draws heavily on the resource of R. Pierce Beaver’s seminal work, *American Protestant Women in World Mission* (Beaver 1968). By 1860 women had run out of patience for men who would not let them go as missionaries, so they started their own mission boards, and by 1900 there were forty-one in the U.S. and seven in Canada (Patterson 1989, 62). Patterson also tells how the Salvation Army has for over a century filled the pages of its history with female officers who are legally recognized ministers of the gospel, and how from its earliest days the Free Church has ordained women as evangelists and pioneer foreign missionaries. She retells the story of A.J. Gordon, founder of Gordon College and Seminary (now Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary), who saw a woman barred from giving a report at a missions convention, even though she had freely ministered in public overseas. Apparently troubled by the inconsistency, Gordon wrote in support of women and welcomed them to train at his school (Patterson 1989, 62-63). Kraft and Crossman add other leaders like D.L. Moody, A.B. Simpson, Hudson Taylor and Fredrik Franson, who believed in

encouraging women's gifts for public ministry and saw the need to recruit and send women to evangelize cross-culturally (Kraft and Crossman, 15). As reported in Ruth Tucker's book, *Guardians of the Great Commission*, from their own correspondence and articles, it can be said that "the vast majority of women missionaries were motivated by a deep sense of commitment to God, far more than by any desire to attain personal recognition or power" (Tucker 1988, 38). In response to hearing moving reports from such women, their sisters in North American churches caught a dynamic world vision and donated their money, time, energy, organizational ability, and prayer support to the global effort (Tucker 1988, 38).

Tucker also points out that by the early decades of the 20th Century, the women's missionary movement had become the largest women's movement in the United States, with women outnumbering men on the mission field by a ratio of more than two to one (Tucker 1988, 10). Patterson retells what has happened in the past century, again drawing on material from R. Pierce Beaver. Agencies governed by men began to pressure the women's societies to merge with denominational boards, arguing that women's societies drained off funds. Eventually women gave in, stipulating that they retain their leadership. However, within twenty years, forty-eight women's societies had closed up, and by the late 1950s very few women held leadership positions (Patterson 1989, 63). Little wonder that many women spent the rest of the century struggling to minister in male-driven mission agencies (even in the new millennium, some still do). In spite of this, as Kraft and Crossman report, two thirds of the missions force has been and currently still is female. "Many mission executives agree that the more difficult and dangerous the work, the more likely women are to volunteer to do it!" (Kraft and Crossman 1999, 16).

Patterson highlights sociological factors, claiming that the fate of women in missions is also related to women's roles in society at large. Men and women contributed equally as they worked side-by-side on the farm, but when the Industrial Revolution came many families moved to the cities, where middle-class women stayed at home, while men worked as the providers. Although the women's suffrage movement had given women the right to vote and greater access to education, the end of World War I and the Great Depression curtailed both education and jobs for women. During World War II women again were plunged into the workforce, but when the war was over fewer women gave up their jobs and since then the number of women receiving education and working outside the home has increased (Patterson 1989, 64-65). Upon returning from war, men had sought to re-establish their dominance in the workplace, but after World War II it became apparent that women were not as passive to relinquish their rights in the workplace, at home or in society in general.

In an article entitled "Trends in Missions: A woman's place" (Murray Zoba 2000), Wendy Murray Zoba draws from Dana Robert's book, *American Women in Mission* (Roberts 1997), recounting how the fundamentalist/modernist controversy erupted. In a reaction against liberals who were challenging the authority of Scripture, fundamentalists sought to limit women's roles, based on the two controversial Pauline passages (1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2). Women's roles in many evangelical denominations thus underwent a strange reversal, with the result that women were no longer viewed as equal partners with men in ministry, as they had been in the days of Moody and Simpson. Evangelical mission organizations followed suit in keeping women in subordinate roles.

“Postwar prosperity and the baby boom created a new paradigm that defined women as keepers of the domestic front ... This, in turn, spurred a backlash: the feminist movement of the 1960s that challenged conventional definitions of women’s roles” (Murray Zoba 2000, 44). It has been said that feminism was also indirectly influenced by the push for justice and equality for African Americans (Patterson 1989, 65). Forging the path for women in the 1960s and 1970s, the “Women’s Lib” movement prodded men and women to examine critically the implications of western culture, with its deliberate pattern of forcing women to occupy secondary roles in the world in relation to men (Glasser 1978, 403).

The non-Christian tones of the feminist movement (individual rights, personal expression and freedom from moral constraint) offended evangelicals and caused many groups to polarize even further in the opposite direction. In its most radical expression, feminism also ridiculed domesticity. The evangelical church took a strong stand against many of these misguided assumptions, but this had catastrophic consequences since the response also spawned what Ruth Tucker calls “neofundamentalism,” a movement that has imposed strict limits on how a woman can function in the kingdom of God, which in turn affects how women can function in missions (Murray Zoba 2000, 44). Traditional roles for men and women were presented as the only biblical option – an understanding which permeated much of popular evangelicalism through to the end of the 20th century – reflected in such forums as William Gothard’s “Basic Youth Conflicts” of the 1970s, James Dobson’s “Focus on the Family” of the 1980s, and John Piper’s “Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood” of the 1990s.

Nevertheless, even the evangelical church was unable to evade the challenges of feminism. In 1973 the “Evangelical Women’s Caucus” was formed, with the purpose of calling both men and women to mutual submission and active discipleship, identifying themselves as “biblical feminists” with a shared commitment to help people use their gifts and abilities without regard for sexual stereotypes (Glasser 1978, 404). In the North American evangelical context of the 1980s and 1990s, old habits of excluding women from certain ministries and leadership functions began to die hard on the axioms of revised biblical interpretation (as reflected in the previous chapter). Advocating the newer egalitarian view are a growing number of evangelicals, many under the banner of “Christians for Biblical Equality” – the effects of which have been increasingly seen in evangelical publications (Swartley 1983, Keener 1992, Cunningham and Hamilton 2000, Stassen and Gushee 2003, Sumner 2003, and Stackhouse 2005, to name a few). The ripple effects have filtered into the evangelical missions community over the past couple decades and are spreading further in this new millennium. Talented and capable women are now speaking to the issues of women in missions, with neither feminist stridency nor passive acceptance of the status quo – making themselves vulnerable through transparency and revealing the pain caused by patriarchal mission structures and practices, while not harboring bitterness (Corwin 1997, 400).

Married Women in Mission

Similar to Patterson and also based on the work of historian R. Pierce Beaver, Joyce Bowers offers a brief historical perspective in her article entitled, “Roles of

married women missionaries: A case study” (Bowers 1984). Summarizing the history, she claims that “a lack of recognition affected single women missionaries to some degree, but was even more characteristic of missionary wives whose husbands’ work was often seen to be the “real” mission work” (Bowers 1984, 4). The very use of the term “missionary wife” and the obvious lack of the term “missionary husband” was indicative of the manner in which married female missionaries were regarded by conservative evangelical mission agencies for most of the last century.

Bowers recalls how both husbands and wives went through a lengthy application process and both were included in the commissioning ceremony. However, with few exceptions, Bowers states that “the husband was the only person given a particular assignment, and the wife accompanied him but was largely on her own in finding avenues of service that fitted her training, gifts, and preferences” (Bowers 1984, 4). In her further study of this issue, Bowers recognized that the breadth of involvement of married women was increasing, revealed in how they viewed their various roles, which Bowers categorizes as: homemaker, background supporter, teamworker, and parallel worker (as in a parallel ministry to her husband, not necessarily connected to his) (Bowers 1984, 6).

Bowers further illustrates these four categories, which she calls “*wifestyles*” in her follow-up article, entitled “Women’s roles in missions: Where are we now?” (Bowers 1985). She states that a key issue in this categorization is not what the wife *does* but *how she sees herself*, and secondarily *how she is seen by her husband*. “One very live issue is whether or not both marital partners agree on the wife’s role, or have (perhaps unrecognized) differences of perception or opinion” (Bowers 1985, 357). Of special note

related to this issue is a recent article by Nancy Crawford, entitled “Relationship between role perception and well-being in married female missionaries” (Crawford, 2005).

Evaluating literature on women’s roles, Crawford states, “Women who perceive themselves as only gaining the title of “missionary” by virtue of being married to a missionary might be at higher risk for depression and low self-esteem than women who perceive themselves to be missionaries in their own rights” (Crawford 2005, 188).

Through the results of her own study, Crawford modifies Bowers’ earlier classifications in the following manner: the homemaker and background supporter group naturally together as “Support Worker,” and the teamworker and parallel worker group together as “Direct Worker.” Crawford discovered that Direct Workers were found to have lower levels of emotional distress than Support Workers (Crawford 2005, 194).

In her article, entitled “Wives: Homemakers or mission employees?” Susan De Vries asserts that there are many obstacles to full integration of women in mission work. Some of these, such as young children, she admits cannot be eliminated. However, she claims that other deterrents can be eliminated, including the attitudes of both men and women, the lack of accountability or rewards for women, lower educational standards of acceptance for wives, and the lack of long-range career planning for wives (De Vries 1986, 402). De Vries also asserts that women need the encouragement of recognition, suggesting that the contributions of missionary wives could be enhanced by things like office space, job titles with corresponding authority, responsibility to help form and achieve team goals, and commendations when specific projects are completed (De Vries 1986, 403). In regard to remuneration, De Vries states that instead of a ‘salary’ given

only to the husband (which in most cases is actually ‘support’ raised by the couple) structures should be set up such that each of them receive an income/allowance, in order for both partners to feel equally responsible and duly compensated (De Vries 1986, 407). Bowers also mentioned this in her case study, recalling earlier days when salaries, social security and retirement benefits were all awarded to the husband (Bowers 1984, 4). In the past couple decades an increasing number of organizations handle finances in a much more egalitarian manner on the mission field, in addition to having specific assignments and evaluations for each spouse.

However, it seems that some mission agencies (often those connected to church denominations) do not carry these practices over when the couple returns to North America and the husband is promoted to a leadership position at the headquarters. In some cases the wife loses not only her ‘allowance’ but also her status as a missionary employed by the mission/denomination – and as a result loses her role(s) in ministry and opportunities for meaningful involvement in the organization. It remains to be seen from the findings in this project what effects such situations have upon these spouses. As De Vries points out, “a job without accountability and reward is only a volunteer position” (De Vries 1986, 410).

Patterson gives specific recommendations for mission agencies, which have been heeded by some but ignored by others, seemingly stuck in a time warp. These include:

1. Have uniform educational requirements for male and female candidates.
2. Select and place candidates based on their gifts and abilities, not their sex.
3. Avoid glaring inconsistencies, like allowing a woman with a Ph.D. to train national pastors and leaders, but not allowing her to preach and pastor herself.
4. Be honest with female candidates about the obstacles in specific fields.

5. Encourage couples to share child-rearing responsibilities so that both can do ministry.
6. Encourage couples who may opt for the wife to do full-time ministry while the husband primarily does childcare.
7. Formalize a grievance procedure for sex discrimination.
8. Establish leadership development objectives for both men and women.
9. Allow couples to have separate financial accounts, if they wish, so women can establish credit. (Patterson 1989, 69-70)

Member Care

The literature on Member Care led the researcher to consider two aspects that contribute to better understanding the problem of this project. These are delineated in the following manner: missionary member care and transition care.

Missionary Member Care

To better define the nuances of missionary member care related to the topic at hand, there are four elements that help describe it: missionary member care in general, member care for women, member care for married women, and retention factors for married women.

Missionary Member Care in General

The emergence of books and articles on member care in the social sciences has proliferated for at least two decades. The term ‘missionary member care’ was birthed out of this trend and has been in use for about two decades, highlighted at the yearly “Mental Health and Missions” and “Pastors to Missionaries” conferences that take place in the United States, involving many evangelical mission organizations. Presentations are published in books such as *Helping Missionaries Grow: readings in mental health &*

missions (O'Donnell and O'Donnell 1988), and are also available on an internet site called "Missionary Care: Resources for Missions and Mental Health" (www.missionarycare.com). A helpful resource for the whole family was compiled from an international conference on missionary kids, entitled *Understanding and Nurturing the Missionary Family* (Echerd and Arathoon 1989). The Evangelical Missionary Society holds conferences and publishes books, such as *Caring for the Harvest Force in the New Millennium* (Steffen and Pennoyer 2001). Mission Training International has also published a book, entitled *Enhancing Missionary Vitality: mental health professions serving global mission* (Powell and Bowers 2002). A "Doctor of Ministry in Missionary Member Care" was launched at Columbia International University to further this field of study and offer post-graduate training for those who give leadership in this area.

After years of missionary member care rhetoric, it is encouraging to see how some evangelical missions organizations are finally making this a reality through these conferences and tangible resources. In addition, denominationally affiliated missions like those of the Southern Baptists and The Christian and Missionary Alliance, often in partnership with other interdenominational mission agencies, have the resources to furnish mobile member care units in key regions of the world. These units offer professional psychological assessment and counseling, and provide training for field and team leaders on topics such as trauma counseling and aftercare.

Member Care for Women

Included in missionary member care are women's issues, as reflected in chapters of books such as *Helping Missionaries Grow: Readings in mental health & missions* (O'Donnell and O'Donnell, 1988) and *Frontline Women: Negotiating crosscultural issues in ministry* (Kraft 2003). Many of the chapters in these books were articles originally published in journals like *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, and *Journal of Psychology & Theology*. An organization called "Women of the Harvest," with a periodical bearing the same name, addresses issues for single and married female missionaries, and provides retreats for these missionaries on furlough in North America.

In her letter to the editor of *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, entitled "Women in mission," Laurel Cocks states, "Interest in issues of women in missions has waxed and waned over the years. Now I am observing another wave of interest in women's issues – even a groundswell" (Cocks 1998, 139). The 1970s and 1980s were seminal decades for the study of women's issues in evangelicalism, but there was a noticeable lack of literature in the 1990s, at least in the missions arena. However, by the end of the last century, as Cocks stated, the subject seemed to burst open again. As stated earlier, the growth of the egalitarian view among evangelicals, as witnessed in the number of books written from this perspective in the past decade, has undoubtedly given rise to the renewed debate on women's issues in mission. The very existence of the thesis at hand lends credence to this fact.

Member Care for Married Women

Several studies have shown that married missionary women report higher levels of stress and experience burnout on the field more than married missionary men (Chester 1983, Gish 1983, Carter 1999). The reasons cited include role issues, loneliness, isolation, cultural and social confinement, coworkers attitudes toward their job, self-acceptance, communication across cultural and language barriers, extended family concerns, relationship with their spouse, among others. According to a study done by Elizabeth Hall and Nancy Duvall, the above findings highlight the tensions between family demands and work that women experience (Hall and Duvall, 2003). This reinforces what Elizabeth Jackson wrote about many years earlier, observing that especially if the woman has young children, she will face added adjustment pressure from the many roles that she assumes (Jackson 1980, 198). Certainly, at almost every stage of her family's life, a married woman must re-negotiate her role (O'Donnell 1987, 288).

While most studies and articles relate to married missionary women who are serving overseas, some aspects can also be applied to spouses of mission leaders in North America. Most notable is the lack of regard for the fact that these women have actively served in full-time ministry overseas. Back on the home front the husband is lauded for his ministry and asked to speak about 'the work', but the wife is usually only asked to share about her family, leaving her to ponder the validity of her own ministry, both previous and present (Downey 2005, 66).

Another issue relates to the fact that women are often referred to as a "missionary wife," as discussed earlier. While this terminology is not as common in the contemporary

context, it is still common in field leadership positions (i.e. “Field Director’s Wife”) and for spouses in North American mission leadership (i.e. “International Director’s Wife,” or in reference to whatever leadership title is used for the husband). Does this mean she derives her identity and ministry only through his position? Does she merely minister vicariously through him? As Bowers states:

In virtually all mission situations, a husband’s work assignment takes priority over his wife’s ... Often, stated mission policy gives men and women equal status in that both are commissioned and sent as full missionaries, but in many subtle ways women are given the message that they are subordinate or even inferior members of the mission team – but to complain about their “place” would be unspiritual. (Bowers 1985, 355)

Karol Downey asserts in her article, entitled “Missionary or wife: Four needed changes to help clarify the role of a missionary wife,” that “while most missionary men and single missionary women have well-defined roles, the constantly changing roles of married missionary women are often unclear” (Downey 2005, 67). Added to this is the limitation in ministry options for a married woman, due to the need to find a role within geographical proximity to her husband’s work. This is true for overseas service, and may be more limiting for spouses of mission leaders in North America, where the number of options will largely depend upon the structure and ethos of the mission agency and/or supporting denomination(s).

As mentioned already, married missionary women do not always have a job description to help them focus on the specifics of their role in ministry. Also, each woman has a different perception of her role and how much time she should put into ministry outside her home and family (which was a major factor in the categorizations

assigned as a result of Bowers' case study). As Downey suggests, a clearer definition of ministry is needed, to clarify the spheres of ministry for married missionary women (Downey 2005, 69). Balance between home and ministry is also needed, but this should not be seen as a gender issue, as it is necessary for both men and women missionaries (Downey 2005, 70). While these aspects are better understood in recent years overseas, again on the home front in mission leadership there often appears to be a double-standard and the onus is put upon the wife to support her husband by maintaining the home life, often without her husband, who spends long days at the mission headquarters and is frequently required to travel on behalf of the agency.

Downey further suggests that mission agencies should help husbands and wives set long-term goals for their development and training, and in order to avert surprises on all sides the three should discuss a married woman's role even before candidacy (Downey 2005, 72). Likewise, Crawford recommends more pre-field education to what a female missionary might realistically expect her role to be, both in terms of the missionary sub-culture and the host culture (Crawford 2005, 195). This advice could be extended to the role of a mission leader's spouse, which should be addressed before the decision is made to move into leadership on the field or in North America, so the couple understands exactly what they are getting into in terms of what the new situation will look like for the woman and, indeed, whether or not her role is even being considered in the proposition.

Another issue relates to recognition of the value of women missionaries, helping them to minister effectively and acknowledging them when they do (Downey 2005, 71). It is true that a woman "not only joins her husband in work, but sometimes equals and

even outdoes him in service” (Maxwell 1987, 148). Many men who are promoted into mission leadership have wives whose ministry as missionaries has been exemplary, perhaps even contributing to their husband’s success. These women have made a significant contribution in their own right. In a summary of main findings from their “Satisfaction with Cross-cultural Ministry Survey,” Donovan and Myers state:

Where this is not appreciated and there is no opportunity to develop a ministry appropriate to her gifts and training, she will naturally become frustrated. Within an egalitarian team ... there is likely to be much more possibility for her to use her gifts. (Donovan and Myers 1997, 4)

Mission agencies need to understand these issues. “Critically important are the attitudes, awareness and sensitivity of men in top administrative positions who are able to recognize and encourage the development of women’s gifts” (Bowers 1988, 487). Again, this advice should be extended to apply not just to women serving overseas, but to the spouses of mission leaders in North America, without bias to their gender. As Downey states, “Women have distinctive viewpoints on mission trends and issues. Women want to enhance and improve their mission agencies. Agencies must listen to their views and use their ideas. Women must be given freedom to minister and use their God-given gifts” (Downey 2005, 71).

Retention Factors for Married Women

A pilot study comparing female missionaries appointed in the 1980s with those of the 1950s, found that although the demands of cross-cultural missions had increased, the formal preparation of married women to face these demands had leveled off since the 1950s. The potential frustration came in later years after children were gone and the

women faced a crisis of meaning and purpose. These unfulfilled women were likely candidates to leave overseas service (Beck 1986, 231). As alluded to earlier, other studies on the role of women have shown that low role clarity is associated with a decline in self-confidence, an increased sense of futility and a greater propensity to leave (Donovan and Myers 1997, 1). A study in retention and attrition rates of missionary school personnel lists spousal role satisfaction among the factors for long term retention of personnel (Wilcox 1995, 105). A similar study observed the congruence between the role a woman has and her desired role, and her freedom to choose her own role, as being key factors to well-being and retention (Hall and Duvall 2003, 303).

According to Donovan and Myers:

The idea of empowerment through things like identifying potential, training to develop it, adding to skills, entrusting with responsibility, mentoring and career development are well known and used in the secular world. They are known to increase personal satisfaction and effectiveness – and organizational commitment. (Donovan and Myers 1997, 2)

The reality has been that when any of the above are provided in mission agencies, generally the men are considered first. Similar to the above, other studies conclude that life-satisfaction and loyalty to the mission organization are equated in the minds of missionary wives (Strickland 1990, English 1995).

A related issue is the question of stewardship – missionaries being good stewards of their gifts and agencies being good stewards of their people. In secular organizational terminology, good human resource management means identifying and facilitating the potential of each person (Donovan and Myers 1997, 3). This is a significant factor for retention in any organization, and mission agencies would do well to heed this advice.

Attention needs to be given to valuing persons, without regard to their gender, as discussed earlier. “An employee’s commitment to an organization is strongly influenced by the organization’s perceived commitment to him/her” (Donovan and Myers 1997, 2). In this sense, a person needs to feel emotionally supported, treated fairly and valued as a person by the mission. Spouses of mission leaders are persons who need these things too. The degree to which they (and their children) feel valued by the mission agency affects both theirs and their husband’s commitment to the organization, and the couple’s overall well-being and longevity in the mission leadership role.

Transition Care

To better understand transition care, there were three elements that helped to describe it: transition, missionary transition, and transition for spouses of mission leaders.

Transition

In the area of transition, the secular world offers many helpful resources. One of the books most widely used and recommended by care givers for those in transition, is *Transition: Making sense of life’s changes* (Bridges, 1980). As outlined by Bridges, the transition process is very similar to that of the grief cycle, which is helpful especially in terms of losses and common resulting emotional reactions as one works through the process of letting go of the past and embracing the new realities of the present.

Another helpful book outlines the psychological and sociological processes associated with disengagement from a role, entitled *Becoming an Ex: The process of role exit* (Fuchs Ebaugh 1988). Four stages of the exit process are outlined: the first stage is

when doubt surfaces about role commitments; the second stage is when the individual begins to seek alternatives; the third stage is the turning point, usually an event that focuses awareness on the fact that the old role is no longer desirable, combined with a new opportunity to do something different with their lives; the fourth stage is that of creating an ex-role, including issues with which ‘exiters’ commonly struggle (Fuchs Ebaugh 1988, 182-184). From an educational theoretical perspective, in a book entitled “Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning,” a chapter on “Perspective Transformation” outlines various models mapping the phases of transition and the transformational learning that can occur at each stage and in various types of transitions (Mezirow 1991).

Many secular books can be found on the transition of moving overseas or repatriating back to one’s own country, including Ted Ward’s classic, *Living Overseas: A book of preparations* (Ward 1984), *The Moving Experience: A practical guide to psychological survival* (Meltzer and Grandjean 1989), *The Art of Crossing Cultures* (Storti 1990), *Moving Your Family Overseas* (Kalb and Welch 1992), *Culture Shock: Successful living abroad* (Pascoe 1993), *Survival Kit for Overseas Living: For Americans planning to live and work abroad* (Kohls 1996), *The Art of Coming Home* (Storti 1997), and *Loss of the Assumptive World* (Kauffman 2002). Many helpful articles are also available, including “Global repatriation” (Mandell and Biel 1994) and “Transnational burnout” (Shames 1995). Resources like these, from the social sciences, are widely used by missionary member care personnel who provide transition care and counseling.

“Transition Dynamics” is a consultancy committed to serving the children, women and men for whom international mobility and cultural transitions are part of daily

life. The organization, “Families in Global Transition, Inc.” provides conferences, which are attended by relocation personnel and facilitators from major corporations, inter-cultural organizations, military bases, small companies, universities and individuals, all of whom are striving to improve international family relocation. A number of Christian organizations were listed on their website as being participants between 2002-2005. This is a relatively new area for the evangelical Christian world, but participation at such conferences over the past few years shows significant steps forward.

Missionary Transition

Books and articles on missionary transition and re-entry have also emerged in the past couple decades. Of particular note are Clyde Austin’s books, *Cross-cultural Reentry: An annotated bibliography* (Austin 1983a) and *Cross-cultural Reentry: A book of readings* (Austin 1986), as well as his article entitled “Reentry stress: The pain of coming home” (Austin 1983b). In this article, Austin states that “A substantial number of missionaries find the homecoming process to be more difficult than the initial adjustment to the field” (Austin 1983b, 278). Missionaries returning from the field often feel like strangers in their own country. They confront issues of self-concept and values, and face disappointments and losses. One of the losses cited, which appears to relate to some spouses of mission leaders, is the underutilization of skills and experience gained on the field. These and other losses can lead to depression, loneliness, fatigue and even physical illness resulting from stress (Austin 1983b, 282-283). Austin offers helpful coping strategies to aid in the transition and re-adjustment process, such supportive individuals and groups, and the retention of family traditions (Austin 1983b, 284-286).

In the book *Third Culture Kids* (Pollock and Van Reken 2001), a chapter entitled “Why high mobility matters” relates some of the perils of the transition process, which can easily be translated to the experiences of some spouses of mission leaders. As stated:

Our basic position in the new community is one of *statuslessness*. We carry knowledge from past experiences ... but none of that knowledge has use in this new place. No one knows about our history, abilities, talents, normal responses, accomplishments, or areas of expertise. Sometimes it seems they don't care. Soon we question whether our achievements in the previous setting were as significant as we thought ... The transition stage is a tough time because we often feel keenly disappointed. The difference between what we expected and what we're experiencing can trigger a sense of panic. All connection and continuity with the past seem gone, and the present isn't what we had hoped it would be. (Pollock and Van Reken, 68-69)

Roberta Jezequel has written a helpful article entitled, “When the time comes to move” (Jezequel 2001). This short article synthesizes much of the material that is now being routinely taught to missionaries and their families in re-entry orientation seminars before they move overseas and upon their return for furlough. Examples of these kinds of re-entry seminars are the week-long “Home Ministry Seminar” and “All The Right Moves Kids Camp” put on yearly by The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada. During sessions instruction is given on the stages of transition and the re-entry process. Missionaries undergo a debriefing interview with a professional psychologist and meet with a physician, both of whom are specialized in missionary care, from the Missionary Health Institute/International Health Management in Toronto, Ontario. This denominational mission agency also finances continued professional counseling, should their members or their children require it on the field or on the home front. This is only one example of a number of mission agencies that have been making great advances forward in practical transition care and counseling for their missionaries.

Transition for Spouses of Mission Leaders

Laura Mae Gardner, of Wycliffe Bible Translators International (WBTI), has spoken and written on “A practical approach to transition for missionaries (Gardner, 2002). Specifically to the issue of transition for spouses of mission leaders, in her insightful and immensely practical paper entitled, “The Morale Curve in Job Transition: Helping the administrator’s wife,” she begins by charting four stages of transition: Stage 1 – Crisis of Entry – The Enthusiasm/”honeymoon” Stage; Stage 2 – Crisis of Arrival – The Starkness Stage; Stage 3 – Crisis of Acceptance – The Anger/Initiative Stage; and Stage 4 – Crisis of Re-entry – The Moderation/Acceptance Stage (Gardner 2001a, 1-2). Because of the importance of this resource for use by spouses of mission leaders, these stages and their detailed analyses have been copied with permission from the author, and appear in Appendix 1.

From both her own personal experiences as a spouse in mission leadership, and in caring for wives of mission leaders, in this paper, Gardner also deals honestly with the losses commonly experienced. A spouse may have lost her place, her contribution, the thing she was trained to do, is good at, and has invested a lot of effort in. She sometimes feels she has lesser or no value, especially if her husband is sought after for leadership and it seems that she is just along for the ride. She may lose job satisfaction, having not been ‘groomed’ for the job, with brand new demands being made. She probably has no job description and often does not know where she fits. She may grieve for her ‘lost’ husband, not having realized or expected the cost of this new position in terms of their marriage relationship and home life. The gap between expectation and reality will

probably be greater for her than for her husband, due to the fact that wives generally receive less (if any) orientation to the job than their husbands (Gardner 2001a, 3).

Gardner then gives detailed advice for how these spouses can help themselves work through the transition in a constructive manner: acknowledge realities, analyze the situation, separate it into its parts, deal with the feelings, evaluate her ability to cope with the situation, discuss the situation, reaffirm her gifts, learn how to “do” anger, and finally commit to it and utilize resources. Cautionary words are also offered, against an adversarial relationship with colleagues and a sense of her husband being a victim, followed by a strong exhortation for each spouse making the marriage a higher priority than the work (Gardner 2001a, 3-6).

Also highlighted in this paper are suggestions for supervisors (i.e. denominational presidents and mission agency boards), which can be summarized as follows: consult both the husband and wife in the transition; narrow the expectation-reality gap through information given beforehand; do not use pressure to motivate; orientate both the husband and wife; provide member care and continued support for each of them; attribute value and help the wife sort out her role, giving her specific goals to achieve; and not to compare this couple with the last leader and his wife since every couple is unique (Gardner 2001a, 6-7). This is an excellent paper, highly recommended for individuals anticipating or in the midst of such a transition, and for those responsible for hiring and providing member care for the couple through this transition.

Although Gardner’s papers are not based on formal surveys or qualitative study of spouses in mission leadership, they come the closest of any known resources to the topic

of the project at hand. Gardner's analyses and recommendations are reinforced in chapters five and six of this project, lending further credence to her observations.

The Trailing Spouse

To clearly explain the trailing spouse situation, there were three elements that helped to describe it: the trailing spouse in general, the trailing spouse in mission, and the trailing spouse in mission leadership.

The Trailing Spouse in General

The concept of the trailing spouse – referring to a person who gives up a job in order to follow their partner to a new location where that person has found employment – has been around for many years in the secular sphere and has been given increased attention with the reality of globalization. Since the 1990s many books have emerged from the foreign service sector: *The Trauma of Moving: Psychological issues for women* (McCollum 1990), *Surviving Overseas: A wife's guide to successful living abroad* (Pascoe 1992), *Women's Guide to Overseas Living* (Piet-Pelon and Hornby 1992), *The Accidental Diplomat: Dilemmas of the trailing spouse* (Hughes 1998), *Homeward Bound: A spouse's guide to repatriation* (Pascoe 2000), *Culture Shock!: A wife's guide* (Pascoe 2002), and *Diplomatic Baggage: The adventures of a trailing spouse* (Keenan 2006).

There are striking similarities in the lives of foreign service wives, and wives of mission leaders, especially in regard to the 'representational duties' that are expected to one degree or another (also not unlike those of CEO and politicians' spouses). These duties neither represent an official role nor merit remuneration for the time and effort

invested (with the exception of CEO divorce settlements which now commonly recognize and remunerate them accordingly). Upon repatriation, there is often a difficult adjustment in the *loss* of these representational duties (even if begrudged while overseas), as well as the loss of status, career, and the privileges of their life overseas. Accordingly, spouses of mission leaders face these same losses, and the reduction of active involvement in the homeland is also parallel, to the extent that the author of this thesis-project highly recommends *The Accidental Diplomat* and *Homeward Bound* as required reading for wives of mission leaders who find themselves in similar circumstances.

The level of awareness for the transition and re-entry struggles of trailing spouses in the foreign service has been raised since women's issues were brought to the foreground in the 1960s and 1970s in North America, resulting in some positive changes regarding their status and role. However, there are still many aspects not understood at an organizational level, as reflected in the difference of perspective from the 'old guard' with their traditional marriages and the new younger set – especially wives who are professionals themselves but whose careers are curtailed by the trailing spouse realities that face them once they move. A practical article on this subject (although written for a North American context), which will help trailing spouses to be proactive at the organizational level is "Help for 'The Trailing Spouse': What you can do when you're forced to look for work in a strange place" (Hines 2005).

A book entitled, *A Portable Identity: A woman's guide to maintaining a sense of self while moving overseas*, relays the fascinating personal accounts of the two authors who were trailing spouses to Bangkok, Thailand (Bryson and Hoge 2003). Again, the

similarities to the experiences of some trailing spouses of mission leaders are hard to miss, and the following details recall the forward of this project. Bryson tells how she had been misinformed, only to discover upon arrival that the Thai government would not allow her to work in their country. Well-meaning expatriates suggested volunteering, to “fill in her time” (Bryson and Hoge 2003, 145). She laments how spouses like her are not considered by embassies and, as professionals, are further insulted when they are offered clerical support roles in the embassy (Bryson and Hoge 2003, 145). Hoge reflects on how, in the United States, one of the first questions people ask is, “What do you do?” However, she says that no one ever asks what an expat wife does, as they assume she simply lives, on the arm of her husband, following him around the world but doing nothing of particular importance (Bryson and Hoge 2003, 184). For this reason, she chose to disassociate herself with other expat wives, but she floundered, not knowing where she belonged. Denying herself nurturing relationships, in her loneliness she channeled the need for connection into a romantic fantasy, which she would often slip into during the day and while trying to sleep at night. This eventually led her into therapy, in order to pull herself out of this pattern of escape (Bryson and Hoge 2003, 185). Although none of the participants in this thesis study reported slipping into a romantic fantasy like Hoge had, a similar experience led to struggles for the author of this project and at least one other mission leader’s spouse, who did not agree to an interview.

Some excellent studies have been conducted related to trailing spouses, including *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior* (Adler 1997) in which the author’s research shows how an international move is particularly difficult for the expatriate wife (Adler 1997, 263). Accordingly, the *GMAC Global Relocation Trends Survey*, a wide-

scale yearly report issued since 1993, shows that family-related factors have topped the list as responsible for expatriate assignment failure in nearly every survey. When asked which factors are often or sometimes responsible for assignment failure, respondents cite spouse/partner dissatisfaction (90%) and family concerns (92%) (www.gmacglobalrelocation.com). This concurs with the research on attrition, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Other recent large-scale worldwide studies focus on the plight of the expatriate spouse and how her needs can be better met. *Many Women Many Voices: A study of accompanying spouses around the world* (Copeland 2002) highlights the factors that affect spouses' international experiences at a deeper level and offers specific recommendations for spouses and sponsoring organizations. Another study, *The Trailing Spouse Survey* (McNulty 2005), available online, exploring issues of organizational support, spouses' willingness to relocate, work/life challenges, dual-career challenges, assignment success factors and repatriation, with specific recommendations offered from trailing spouses who completed the survey (www.thetrailingspouse.com).

In perusing all of the above books and studies, again it is striking to notice how many of the struggles of trailing spouses overseas are also experienced by trailing spouses who return to their passport country, including mission leaders' spouses – some of whom are no longer respected or remunerated for their professional capabilities, many whose identity fades into the nebulous 'wife of' role, and all whose level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction greatly affects their husband in his role.

In the past, transition care for trailing spouses of foreign service officers and businessmen overseas was limited to international women's clubs, with most embassies

and companies relying upon this network of expatriate spouses. Nowadays, contracts are being made with “International Employee Assistance Programs” to provide expatriates with support and access to confidential mental health services. Some are underwriting spouse-managed information centers, enabling spouses in diverse locations to link together through the internet, and a plethora of websites have been created as a result: www.expatechange.com, www.expatexpert.com, www.transitonsabroad.com, etc. Others sponsor regional events, such as the European-based “Women on the Move” conferences. Unfortunately, organizations and personnel who prepared well for the original cross-cultural transition often forget to prepare equally well for the transition home. This is reflected in attrition rates *after* repatriation, as transition home is often more difficult than moving abroad in the first place (Pollock and Van Reken 2001, 263).

There are an increasing number of resources available from a Christian perspective, such as books like *Women on the Move: A Christian perspective on cross-cultural adaptation* (Janssen 1992), as well as some of the others which were listed earlier. Organizations like “The Christian Employment Resource” and “The Exodus Network” offer helpful services (including Realtors) and practical advice for trailing wives who follow their spouses in relocation due to transition in ministry, as outlined in articles such as Allison Hester’s, “We’re moving where? Surviving life as a trailing spouse” (Hester 2006). Hester points out that “trailing spouse” was originally a real estate term referring to the spouse who follows her husband to a new location due to a job transfer. Up until recent years it was very rare to have a woman as the employee with a trailing spouse husband (Stroh, Dennis and Cramer 1994, 177, Wilcox 1995, 110). As

Hester asserts, “while the term has traditionally been synonymous with the wife, in today’s society, more and more husbands are taking the role of trailing spouse” (Hester 2006, 1). In evangelical mission leadership circles this is still very rare and, unfortunately, in spite of efforts, a male trailing spouse could not be found to participate in an interview for this thesis-study.

Hester discusses the reality that,

Husbands who take on a new job role in a new location often must quickly dive into work, leaving their wives to handle all the intricate details involved with a move, including settling their families into their new community. On top of those pressures, these wives are simultaneously hit with two of the top five most stressful situations around: moving and unemployment. (Hester 2006, 1)

For the former-missionary trailing spouse repatriating to North America, this stress is often heightened. As illustrated in the findings of this project, many of these couples are purchasing a house for the first time in their lives, some twenty years after most of their contemporaries purchased their first home. With husbands quickly drawn into their new roles, wives are left with this new responsibility. Also, there is reverse culture shock for the whole family when the situation involves moving back to western culture, which now seems so foreign especially to children. Add to this a woman’s possible changes in status, role and employment, and it can add up to an identity crisis and self-esteem struggles, resulting in a difficult transition and re-entry.

Hester offers advice to help wives prepare themselves to successfully endure life as a trailing spouse. Much of this advice involves being prepared ahead of time, with the assertion that “the most successful moves are the ones that are researched first” (Hester 2006, 2). This does not appear to be possible in many of the mission leadership

situations, where very little time is given for the decision or the transition, which is also illustrated in the findings of this project. Additionally, the article states that “trailing spouses have a number of work-related options, from taking a short sabbatical, to starting in a new career field, to working from home” (Hester 2006, 2). For trailing spouses of mission leaders, the expectations of their mission agencies impact these work options.

Regarding alternative opportunities, Hester advises, “if you have difficulty finding a new job, consider volunteering somewhere or even going back to school. This is a great time to take advantage of those things you’ve always wanted to do but never had the opportunity” (Hester 2006, 3). Some of these alternatives are also reported in the findings of this project. As Hester suggests, “how well the trailing wife adapts is essential to how well her husband will succeed in his new job role” (Hester 2006, 1). This is similar to the assertions of the literature on retention factors, and also concurs with the studies on trailing spouses, mentioned earlier.

The Trailing Spouse in Mission

In her article entitled “Missionary wives: Underused asset,” author Carole Maines suggests that one of the career dilemmas faced by missionary wives is a change in the husband’s assignment (Maines 1983, 290). Although she does not use the term “trailing spouse,” Maines recognizes that “the missionary wife is frequently called to change, adjust, and realign her future and her ministry” (Maines 1983, 291). Since mission agencies are limited by lack of personnel and lack of funds, she suggests that mission leaders should utilize the resources available in missionary wives, providing career

counseling to analyze their basic interests and aptitudes. Many missions, in fact, do this equally for wives as for husbands going to the field (and many would now eschew the “missionary wife” terminology), but few mission agencies provide this service upon return to North America to take up mission leadership.

Maines holds that “most missionary wives are not unemployed by their missions, but many of them are sadly underemployed” (Maines 1983, 292). She warns that if mission leaders do not recognize and affirm the woman’s unique abilities and share with her how they can be applied to the new sphere, disappointment begins to replace enthusiasm, as the wife senses that no reciprocal commitment has been made by the mission to her as an individual, and a “second class citizen” mentality begins to develop (Maines 1983, 293). This is reflected in some of the findings of the study at hand.

The Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership

Depending on their family situation, similar to Hester, Maines suggests that wives in transition ought to upgrade, refresh, or begin a program of training in an area in which the mission needs skilled personnel (Maines 1983, 293). Some women who follow their husbands back to North America discover that, in order to qualify for ministry in this context, further education is necessary. If this is done intentionally, not merely with the blessing of the mission but with the goal to prepare the woman for a specific role, this can prove very beneficial for both parties. However, there appear to be cases where the educational option is chosen as an alternative, when the trailing spouse realizes there is no longer a meaningful role for her in the mission agency. As Maines points out, “if her

development has been completely at her own initiative, she sees no relationship or further ministry through the mission” (Maines 1983, 294).

Another aspect that Maines addresses in regard to the trailing spouse who returns to North America, is that “the skills she utilized overseas were primarily domestic and church involvements, not exactly the sort of thing one could take out into the marketplace and provide a livelihood for one’s family” (Maines 1983, 290). If they no longer have a clarified role in the mission, spouses of mission leaders often settle into lay ministries in their local churches. However, due to financial constraints some find it necessary to seek employment in order to supplement their husband’s income, thus curtailing their church ministries. In such cases, availability for involvement in their husband’s ministry (i.e. travel) is also reduced – again, these issues are addressed in the findings chapter. Others with children in the home may also be limited, but when the children have left and their time becomes discretionary, as Maines states:

Missionary wives will find their own ministries. Some will go back to the work force; they will resume old careers or begin new ones. They will feel as though there is really nothing they can contribute to the task of their mission, and thus will become a lost resource to its ministry just when they have the most to give. (Maines 1983, 295)

Leadership

In the general area of Leadership, books too numerous to name were available in both secular and Christian spheres. Within literature on Christian leadership, there were three aspects that aid in better understanding the problem of this project. These can be categorized in the following manner: mission leadership, women in mission leadership and spouses of mission leaders.

Mission Leadership

Regarding Christian leadership, articles appear from time to time in magazines like *Christianity Today*, and in *Leadership* which is solely devoted to the subject. The “Arrow Leadership Program,” founded by evangelist Leighton Ford, has as one of its primary components the mentorship and pastoral care of emerging young leaders in Christian ministry, including those in Christian organizational leadership both in North America and overseas. Not surprisingly, many Arrow students find themselves in leadership transitions – either before, during or immediately following the program. Experienced Arrow leadership partners help male and female leaders walk through this process, as they grow in their personal development and professional competencies.

As for literature specifically related to those in mission leadership, there is comparatively much less available, limited to articles which can be found on occasion in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, for example “Wanted: mission administrators” (Cook 1981). Cook writes about formerly successful missionary leaders (which he and others such as Gardner refer to as “administrators”), who feel like ‘square pegs in round holes’ (Cook 1981, 213). He looks at how “The Peter Principle” – wherein leaders tend to rise to their level of incompetence – sometimes applies to those who have spiritual gifts and skills that were effective on the mission field, causing them to be promoted to mission leadership, only to find that they do not have what it takes in their new ministry context (Cook 1981, 214). Cook also discusses “Parr’s Paradox” – where incompetence may result because of hierarchical changes – for example, when a new leader assumes the position at a level above the individual. As Cook puts it, “in other words, a person can

become incompetent because the purpose of the hierarchy has changed and this creates new requirements” (Cook 1981, 215). This sometimes occurs in denominational or mission agency leadership transitions, where the person at the top dictates organizational changes. Cook suggests that “before anyone is shifted to a position that requires new skills and responsibilities, his spiritual gifts must be evaluated in terms of the requirements of the job” (Cook 1981, 216). With the topic of this project in mind, the question not only of the husband’s gifts, but of the wife’s gifts may also be raised, for in many cases new skills will be required of her as well.

Another interesting article, by Kevin Dyer, is entitled “Leadership transition: Painful but necessary” (Dyer 1989). Commendably, Dyer writes about his own experience of turning his mission organization over to younger leadership, freeing them to do things differently than he had (Dyer 1989, 173). In the process, he ensured the mentorship of three godly young men in whose hands he left the ministry – yet absent in his article was any mention about their spouses. While this may have been due to the brevity of the article, the patriarchal overtone was hard to miss, leaving one to ponder the tolerance of younger female spouses for this kind of male-focused atmosphere, especially if they were called, trained and active on the mission field themselves. Should they not, too, be mentored for leadership alongside their husbands? Were they even considered in the transition, and will they be of further usefulness to the mission?

Resources specifically for helping mission leaders can be found in chapters of books such as *Missionary Care: Counting the cost for world evangelization*, for example Richard and Laura Mae Gardner’s chapter on “Supporting mission leaders” (Gardner and

Gardner 1992). While the authors of this article refer briefly to their own context of sharing a mission leadership role in North America with Wycliffe Bible Translators International, the remainder of their article focuses on those in field leadership overseas. There are some areas that interface with mission leadership in North America, but this is not an article primarily dealing with the sphere of this upper-level leadership. Nevertheless, the authors do refer to a survey of North American mission executives (Johnston 1988), which cites the formidable challenges in the job of a mission executive.

Women in Mission Leadership

Back in the 1970s the issue of women's potential for mission leadership was being raised, as reflected in an article by Carroll Ferguson Hunt, "Women missionaries: Making more of their potential" (Hunt 1977). Hunt urged mission leaders to use women more effectively in leadership positions (Hunt 1977, 149). She pointed out that the female missionary often performed what was considered a man's ministry in sending countries, regrettably stating that:

Although women missionaries have been at the front edge of what has happened in missions for more than 150 years, they are regularly by-passed for executive opportunities and not expected to participate in the decision-making process, even though it controls their lives and ministries. Men assume exclusive leadership for a task force whose majority is feminine. (Hunt 1977, 150)

Hunt's recommendations to acknowledge women's contributions, study women's potential, and include women in decision-making (Hunt 1977, 150-152) have been put into play by some mission agencies in the decades since this article was written, with women increasingly involved in decision-making committees and boards. Additionally,

some mission agencies have become more aware of women with leadership and administrative gifts, and have assigned them to serve as field directors and in mission-wide leadership roles. While other agencies have tried to marginalize these women, hoping they would go away, the more progressive ones have encouraged further training and the development of these women's skills and, most importantly, have made room for their valuable contribution by opening up their 'old boys club' mentality and structures.

In the 1980s, referring to women in mission leadership, Patterson discussed sex role stereotypes, purporting that the socialization of sex roles by society and the church was a significant factor in how mission agencies viewed women. "Both sexes perceive that men are more competent leaders than women. Therefore, it takes an unusual degree of effort for male leaders of missions to share their power and authority, and actively to solicit capable women for leadership positions" (Patterson 1989, 67). It is important that when women do assume these responsibilities, men and women alike support and encourage them. Sometimes other women have more problem than men in accepting a woman's authority as a leader – while such women claim this it is due to their theological position on headship, it often seems more to do with petty jealousies and insecurities.

In general, female leaders are more sensitive to relationships in decision-making than men, careful to consider how decisions will affect individuals' and families' lives. As Patterson states, "of course, a leadership style that integrates the best of both male and female traits is preferred" (Patterson 1989, 67). Applying this argument to mission leadership in North America, for the above reasons it has been found beneficial to have men and women working together – even more prudent to have married couples working

in partnership, rather than men working (and traveling) with single women or other married women from their mission headquarters. In any case, Patterson profoundly states that “all leaders, male or female, should model the leadership qualities seen in Jesus, which were not a function of his masculinity but of his spirituality” (Patterson 1989, 67).

In 1980 Jim Reapsome wrote an editorial analysis entitled “Where are female leaders in missions?” in which he stated, almost prophetically, “we fear that evangelical missions may be one of the last holdouts when it comes to changing attitudes toward women leaders. This is no doubt partly because of biblical, historical and cultural conservatism” (Reapsome 1980, 235). Twenty years later Stan Guthrie, in his article “A Woman’s Place in Missions,” observes that, “talk of a “glass ceiling” has filtered down from the business world to the missions world. While little is heard about a “glass ceiling” per se in missions, there is much talk about exercising one’s spiritual gifts or being allowed to respond to God’s call” (Guthrie 2000, 357). In this vein John Orme, Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (IFMA) executive director was quoted as stating, “increasing numbers of women are on field committees that determine field policy in their areas of ministry ... a few have been serious candidates to be field leaders. In addition, a few have been named chief financial officers and personnel directors of agencies” (Guthrie 2000, 360). No doubt women are now occupying increasingly prominent roles in mission leadership, but the glass ceiling is still firmly in place in many mission agencies, especially those which are affiliated with patriarchally structured denominations.

Elizabeth Jackson bravely declared to IFMA leaders in 1980 that:

Christian men and women stand on common ground with a common mandate, common objectives and common goals ... these goals can be reached as men and women coordinate their efforts with a fresh realization of what can be accomplished as we work together supporting, reinforcing, encouraging, protecting and defending one another. Our high calling is to be first a servant of Christ, then a servant to one another, and finally, through mutual dependency, effectively serving the “lost billions.” (Jackson 1980, 198)

In 1989 reflecting the essence of Reapsome’s prophetic words from almost a decade earlier, Patterson wrote “it will not be easy for missions to change from a hierarchical view on the role of women to an egalitarian one” (Patterson 1989, 68). Sadly, these words ring true almost twenty years hence, as changes are still in the developmental phases in many evangelical circles.

The question in this new millennium is, are evangelical mission agencies prepared to accept and integrate the increasing number of female leaders who are being welcomed into evangelical seminaries, where their tuition is happily accepted and they are offered hope for a bright future in ministry? Granted, to speak of the North American church context is beyond the scope of this study, but as for the missions community many agencies are successfully integrating such women into leadership on foreign fields. Yet there still seem to be double-standards on the home front where, as mentioned above, some mission headquarters reflect patriarchal denominational structures that persist at keeping women out of upper-level leadership positions.

In her article entitled, “Wives: Homemakers or mission employees?” Susan DeVries cites the major roadblock for the full utilization of women and their gifts in mission as being men – often taking the form of a subtle, unconscious bypassing of women rather

than outright discrimination (De Vries 1986, 404). Accordingly, Wendy Murray Zoba writes, “it isn’t that women are intentionally excluded as much as a blind spot in the largely male-run evangelical subculture” (Murray Zoba 2000, 42). Guthrie agrees:

Missions has been mostly a male province, at least when it comes to leadership and decision making. And with a few exceptions, it still is. Of the member agencies of the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association, for example, not one has a female CEO, even though 53.5 percent of the IFMA missionaries from the U.S. (and 55.7 percent from Canada) are women. The IFMA, however, does have a female president - Susan Perlman. (Guthrie 2000, 358)

It appears that most women have come to accept the fact that they will be overlooked for upper-level positions of mission leadership, and have learned to live with the status quo. As Bowers states, “critically important are the attitudes, awareness, and sensitivity of the men in top administrative positions who are able to recognize and encourage the development of women’s gifts” (Bowers 1985, 360). Even then, as reported from an interview with Perlman:

Women sometimes have to meet a higher standard than their male counterparts to be considered for such positions. Or, they tend to have to prove themselves over a longer trial period. It’s not all that different than what it takes for women in any profession that has traditionally been male-dominated to find acceptance. (Guthrie 2000, 358).

Perlman outlines several reasons for the skepticism in evangelical mission agencies:

“The barriers that are there are, sadly, ones of either holding to convention, of insecurity of those who hold power in existing structures, or of those who, while sincere, have a faulty understanding of Scripture” (Guthrie 2000, 358-359).

An article by Helen Herndon, entitled “How many “dropouts really are “pushouts”?” addresses those who are pushed out of missions for a variety of reasons

(Herndon 1980). One reason pertains to women who have professional backgrounds and much to offer, but encounter male-dominated structures and attitudes, and end up feeling unappreciated by fellow missionaries and leaders. As Herndon asserts, “There is little place in missions for Deborahs, Miriams, and Priscillas” (Herndon 1980, 15). Although it was hoped that this situation would have corrected itself over the decades since this article was written (added to those hauntingly prophetic words of Reapsome and Patterson), the same phenomenon can still be found in some North American mission leadership contexts, in addition to the overseas context in which Herndon was writing.

Bowers insightfully recognized:

The presence of numerous gifted, experienced women who are natural leaders combined with an almost complete lack of recognized, legitimized channels for female leadership results in manipulative and often disruptive methods of influencing decision-making – which, in turn, reinforces male fears of female leadership. (Bowers 1985, 359)

While many mission agencies are now well past this stage, again, some are still not. As Bowers concludes, “The goal is not for women to take over doing what men have done, but for the entire mission enterprise to be enriched and refined by reflecting God’s full image in humanity, male and female” (Bowers 1985, 359). Patterson likewise states:

Since two-thirds of the “manpower” in missions is female, and since women have not been allowed to exercise their full potential, surely fulfillment of the Great Commission would be enhanced if women were allowed full participation as equals at every level of decision-making activity. (Patterson 1989, 69)

Having said all of the above, it is important to note that certain mission agencies stand head and shoulders above the rest leading the way in attempts to put gifted women into positions of leadership on the mission field and in their sending bases. Examples are Interserve, SIM International, Wycliffe Bible Translators International (WBTI) and Youth

With A Mission (YWAM), among others. The general trend in the growth of the egalitarian view in evangelical circles has given rise to greater opportunities for women in upper-level mission leadership.

Some mission agencies that have been slower to afford women leadership opportunities, lay blame on certain cultures that they work in partnership with, where men are hesitant to put women into positions of leadership and would not be willing to function under them. To this, Patterson retorts:

Cultures in parts of the world where missions work, should not deter boards from presenting the complete image of God. Rather, missions should raise the level of women in cultures where they are devalued, by modeling equality. Rather than make women accept subordinate roles in such cultures, the mission should show that both male and female can contribute equally to the body of Christ, by including women at every level of decision-making and in all parts of the work. (Patterson 1989, 66).

This should be happening all the more in the North American context, yet many evangelical denominations and mission agencies still lag behind society, reinforcing the patriarchy that presides over hierarchical structures and boards. “In most evangelical mission agencies women are not in the upper echelons of leadership where priorities are drawn and decisions are made. Women in their 30s, 40s and 50s, who are moving up the ladder, are having difficulty securing responsible positions in mission agencies” (Murray Zoba 2000, 45). Jim Plueddemann, former general director of SIM, states (as documented by Murray Zoba), “by limiting half of the evangelical force that have legitimate spiritual gifts, we’re not hurting the cause of women so much as the cause of Christ. Let’s quit fighting the liberals and the radical feminists and get back to the task at hand” (Murray Zoba 2000, 45).

Patterson would concur, adding an area from the social sciences, namely adult developmental research, in which she sees another factor to consider in encouraging women to take leadership in missions: “Adult developmental theorists agree that somewhere around mid-life there seems to be a reversal in the needs of men and women. Women become more aggressive and achievement-oriented, while men have a greater need for and interest in relationships” (Patterson 1989, 68). If this is true, as alluded to earlier, the very stage in life that some spouses of mission leaders are ‘demoted’ to support roles on the field or in North America, is the developmental phase where they could be ramping up to *more* involvement in leadership. As such, understandably some of them struggle with their identity and role, which is also illustrated in the findings chapter. Provocatively, Patterson concludes:

In light of these needs, not only should mission agencies encourage women to achieve and assume leadership positions, but they should also encourage men to develop their intimacy and relationship needs. Do missions push men to succeed and achieve the same way secular business does? Suppose a wife and mother exhibits leadership skills and potential. In order for her to take a leadership position, should her husband be encouraged to develop his affilial needs by sharing more of the tasks of home and child care? (Patterson 1989, 68)

Wives in Mission Leadership

It should not be surprising today that some of the finest female university and seminary graduates are married to those who become field and mission agency leaders. Mission agencies are either oblivious of them or intentionally integrate them, in order to responsibly steward this human resource. Wives of mission leaders on the field and in North America naturally display Bowers’ various “wifestyles” – some by choice and others as dictated by leadership precedents or official mission policies. Changes in roles

for each of the spouses brought about by the transition may serve to magnify any differences in perception or opinion about what “wifestyle” should be adopted, especially if the situation demands a different one than the natural tendency of the wife, which was characteristic of her in their previous ministry settings.

For example, as Bowers states:

The teamworker and her husband are a single missionary unit – a true team, with what has been called a “two-person single career.” The teamworker sees her role as a missionary as fully equivalent to and inseparable from that of her husband. The parallel worker sees her missionary role separately, much like the role of professional working women – not primarily in relation to her husband’s work. (Bowers 1985, 358)

In Crawford’s terms, the above categories were grouped as “Direct Worker,” meaning the woman is directly involved in mission work (Crawford 2005, 187). Depending on the ethos of the mission, the adjustment for the “Direct Worker” spouse may be harder back on the home front, than for the woman who has seen herself as the “Homemaker” or “Background Supporter,” viewing her husband as the primary missionary (“Support Worker” in Crawford’s terminology). Again, much depends on the mission agency, on precedents, and on the particular couple – but again, there often appears to be disparity between the situation overseas and the situation in North American headquarters, clearly illustrated in the findings chapter of this project.

It is likely that some spouses of mission leaders have accepted a subordinate position, not wishing to jeopardize their husband’s leadership role. As suggested earlier, it may be that they are content to live out their call vicariously through him, but most of today’s educated women with leadership gifts will not easily find satisfactory resolution in this type of arrangement. Bowers states that failure to recognize and deal with

resulting underlying assumptions and tensions “often leads to low self image and long-term, low-grade depression which in turn contributes to health problems, marital and family stress, and a tragic misuse and waste of precious human resources” (Bowers 1985, 358). Sadly, these factors also emerge in the findings.

Over the years, across denominational and interdenominational evangelical mission agency lines, in contrast to the past as recalled earlier by Bowers, increasingly the norm has become that wives have specific assignments on the field, often with ministry plans and goals laid out yearly, in conjunction with their team leader, changing with the seasons of a woman’s life. However, some do not seem to have such clarity in assignment when their husbands are ‘promoted’ to mission leadership on the field, and there appears to be even less clarity for those who move back to North America with their husbands into mission-wide leadership. Women still generally experience greater freedom in ministry and leadership on the mission field than in the homeland, where they may be more restrained and boxed in by North American cultural patterns (Jackson 1980, 204). As noted earlier, they are sometimes constrained by conservative evangelical cultural patterns which affect mission agencies, but are not necessarily reflective of society as a whole. Bowers speaks to this double-standard:

Women overseas have always been more “liberated” than their Stateside sisters, in the sense that they have taken roles as missionaries that they would not have considered, or which were denied them, in their home country. A woman who could not even take up the offering in her home congregation, and for whom ordination was unthinkable, might evangelize, plant churches, and train men to lead them in desperately needy areas of the Third World. (Bowers 1985, 354)

If a married woman has been thus ‘liberated’ overseas and has become accustomed to a clarified, active role in the mission, the exchange of clarity for ambiguity back in North

America may well be cause for serious disappointment. Some missions have remedied the situation by remaining separate from ecclesiastical structures (and accompanying restrictions on women in leadership), functioning in their sending bases very similarly to how they operate on their foreign fields, even retaining the title “missionary.” But again, these examples will emerge in the findings chapter.

In addition to her paper on helping administrator’s wives, cited earlier, Laura Mae Gardner has produced some helpful papers specifically to assist mission leaders, their wives and families, including “Family issues: The administrator’s family”(Gardner 2000a), and “Impact of administrative policies on families: The mentor model” (Gardner 2000b). In her paper entitled, “Survival of administrative marriages and families” (Gardner 2001b), Gardner deals with issues such as travel, information management, visibility of the administrative family, multiple roles of the wife, her losses and needs, the disparity between his and her professional/personal development, children’s reactions to the new position, cost/drain on the husband, and unrealistic expectations for the present reality and future longevity in the role (Gardner 2001b, 1-5).

In her quest for answers Gardner suggests that “it would probably prove to be of great benefit to interview those wives whose husbands have been/are in administrative positions” (Gardner 2001b, 5). Incredibly, the author of the research project at hand only read this statement *after* commencing the study and conducting these very interviews. Gardner gave suggestions for questions that might be asked of these spouses and information that would be helpful to know – both of which were striking in similarity to the questions posed for the interviews in this project (Appendix 3) and the information

gleaned from the interviews. From her own informal research, Gardner gives the following suggestions:

Encourage administrative couples to travel together as often as is feasible; encourage entities to make this financially possible; encourage women to develop relationships with each other that will weather storms; encourage women to develop their own natural and spiritual gifts and use them within the entity; openly (sic) entity discussions of expectations of directors' wives; encourage relationships between the entity women and women outside the entity, e.g., members of other missions, nationals, other expats; offer the wife opportunity to make a "confidential statement" of some kind to the entity. (Gardner 2001b, 6)

Summary

The three bodies of literature: mission, member care and leadership have contributed to the construction of a theoretical framework for understanding the issues for spouses of mission leaders. While there was a wealth of related literature, almost all of it was written in reference to the overseas context. As noted in several places throughout this chapter, many of the same principles could be applied for spouses of mission leaders, but to date Laura Mae Gardner appears to be the only writer who has attempted to do so, and only in the sphere of one mission agency. Nevertheless Gardener has, in her own words, "endeavoured to identify the many, varied and to some extent inevitable, marital and family pressures caused by a husband's transition to an administrative position. An administration that is aware of the issues can take steps to mitigate the impact of the transition" (Gardner 2001b, 6). As cited above, Gardner recommends that spouses of mission leaders should be interviewed to more fully understand their perspective. Not having such a study to draw on, she concludes with an exhortation to married couples in mission leadership:

The responsibility to protect their union rests with the couple. With the tendency for the wife to wind up paying the highest price, husbands and wives MUST take time out and together develop a life style and work role plan that allows both of them to survive and thrive. Both for the sake of the entity and for the couple this cannot be an “either or” situation. It must be a “both and.” (Gardner 2001b, 6)

The author of this thesis would agree that, ultimately, the responsibility for a healthy situation is the couple's. However, from the literature there did appear to be a lack of awareness, in the mission community as a whole and at mission agency headquarters specifically, for the challenges of trailing spouses and how to care for couples (and their children) in mission leadership in North America. As a result, some of these women have not been able to reach a satisfactory resolution in their new reality, and many of them remain a poorly-stewarded commodity in the mission community. All of these factors served to underline the need for further research to be conducted in this area.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESIGN

There are many people who experience the trailing spouse ‘syndrome’ in a variety of professions and fields, including ministry-related careers (i.e. church ministry, parachurch ministry, denominational leadership, Bible college and seminary professors, etc.). However, this study was purposely limited to trailing spouses who have followed their husbands into mission agency leadership, limited to the headquarters of evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission agencies in the United States and Canada. Whereas married couples may transition to mission leadership from a variety of professional backgrounds (i.e. secular professions, pastoral ministry, Bible colleges and seminaries, etc.) this study was further limited to include only those who were formerly missionaries on foreign mission fields, before being called into mission leadership, thereby necessitating a transition from overseas back to their homeland in North America.

Significance

The significance of this thesis is its contribution to the arenas of mission agency leadership and structure, and missionary member care. The evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission community in North America, specifically those at the helm of mission agencies (i.e. executive directors, presidents, boards, etc.), as well as

missionary member care specialists and directors will find the conclusions and recommendations particularly instructive. The expected result is that these people will effect positive changes in their organizational cultures, structures, policies and procedures, in order to provide a more inclusive atmosphere of community and care for mission leaders and their spouses. Mission leaders and spouses themselves will greatly benefit from the study, not only from the effects of having the trailing spouse issue raised in the mission community, but by having the written thesis which includes several practical resources for their use, and for use by future couples entering into mission leadership (contained in the appendices of this project).

As outlined in the previous chapter, relevant literature to date revealed a lack of attention to this specific group of people, yet the number of individuals and couples that this situation affects, across evangelical denominational and mission agency lines in North America, was significant enough to merit a concentrated study of this nature. The project will also be generalizable to an even broader group of people, in the evangelical community and beyond, as many other trailing spouses like those mentioned above not included in the scope of the study will recognize the transferability of the findings, conclusions and recommendations, as well as the usefulness of the practical material contained in the appendices.

Methodology

This study examined phenomena using a qualitative methodology (Creswell 1998; Leedy and Ormrod 2001) . Potential participants for interviews were gleaned from

informal conversations and networking by the researcher over a period of three years. They were contacted initially through an introductory email with an attached file of the project prospectus which outlined the author's own experience, the nature of the issue and the purpose of the study, in order for them to consider the feasibility of their own participation. For inclusion in this thesis, the copies of these documents which appear in Appendix 2 were altered, to make the mission agency and position titles non-identifying. Square brackets [] with generic terms were employed to replace the original terms, which only the potential participants were privy to, in order to identify the author of the study as coming from a 'legitimate' platform, from an evangelical mission agency.

Upon learning of the individual's willingness to participate in a one-hour interview, a date and time was confirmed by email and a list of questions was sent by attached file for them to consider prior to the interview (Appendix 3). Participants were instructed that they could discuss these questions and their answers with their husbands. However, husbands were not allowed to participate in the interviews, although one of them asked if he could. It was felt that the wives may be more inhibited in the presence of their husbands and, conversely, may feel more free to share from their hearts without their husbands present.

The interview questions, which the researcher had developed from her own experiences and from related literature, started with the personal story of each participant from the point at which they were called to be a missionary. Their personal biographical history was then drawn out through the questions which followed – including their education, ministry in North America, and foreign mission field experience, all of which

of course included their marriage and families. A transitional question turned the focus more specifically to the point at which mission agency leadership was presented. The goal was to help them remember the manner in which that was done and the details of their transition from the mission field to the headquarters of their mission agency in North America, including how the experiences affected them and their children. The last few questions highlighted their journey of adjustment after repatriation, their coping mechanisms, attitudes toward their new realities, and their level of satisfaction with their situation as the spouse of a mission leader in their agency. Lastly, the participants were invited to share words of advice to mission agencies, based on what they had learned from their own experience.

Instead of impersonal surveys, in order to plum the depths of human experience and perspective, informal personal one-hour interviews were conducted, using the list of questions described above as a guide (Appendix 3). It must be noted that the nature of such qualitative interviews calls for a less-structured, more conversational approach. Hence, the interviewer referred to the questions merely as prompts for conversation, rather than an exhaustive list to be worked through methodically. However, the interviewer took note when questions had been covered, in order to procure all the necessary information. While the interviewer respected the proposed time allotment, all of the participants chose to continue past the hour, such that most of the interviews took between sixty and ninety minutes.

It was clearly stated to each participant by email and at the beginning of each interview that when the audio recording was transcribed into a written document, an alpha-numeric code would be substituted for their name, and that their mission agency

name would not be used with material drawn from their interview. In fact, denominations and mission agency names were not included at all. It was also explained to the participants that, if necessary, in order to prevent their being recognized by colleagues from their mission agency, details of their story would be changed to protect anonymity, while preserving the essence of what they were saying. This information put participants at ease, and it appeared that most of them shared very openly about their experiences. A few of them stopped at certain points before revealing negative details, for reassurances of anonymity for themselves and their agencies, as they did not want to be seen as shedding a bad light upon them. The researcher and participants conducted themselves in a very respectful and gracious manner.

The findings for this thesis were based on qualitative research from interviews with spouses from a variety of evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission agencies, which are based out of national headquarters in North America. The goal was 10-12 interviews, in person when possible and over the telephone when distance prevented face-to-face contact. Out of the nineteen potential participants who were contacted, eleven agreed to be interviewed. Seven of these interviews were conducted in person and four were conducted with the use of a speaker phone. Six mission agencies were represented, both denominational and interdenominational in nature. All of the participants were married females, ranging in age from mid 30s to early 60s. As stated in the last chapter, no male spouse of a mission leader was found to participate in this study.

The eleven interviews were recorded onto micro-cassettes using a Sony microcassette recorder. The microcassette for one of the interviews broke and, in spite of

efforts to repair it, no part of the tape was salvageable, nor were adequate written notes taken during the interview. This left ten interviews to be included in the study. For one of the interviews the first side of the microcassette did not record, so only the second half of the interview was included. Using a Panasonic microcassette transcriber, the interviews were then transcribed, saved onto computer files, printed into hard copies and placed in a binder for the exclusive use of the researcher.

After these interviews had been transcribed, data was treated qualitatively, using the computer data analysis software Nvivo V. 2.0 (Nvivo) to produce findings. These findings were presented in narrative form, referenced with the alpha-numeric codes as stated above. Instead of the old manual method, where categories of information were organized using index cards or files, the powerful search engine of the Nvivo software program made categorization and retrieval of information significantly less laborious, and resulted in a more thorough analysis of the data.

Document analysis primarily looks at the text of the document and attempts to decipher the meaning of the text (Gall, Borg and Gall 1996, 362). This meaning can change from reader to reader and historical context to historical context. The researcher realizes that persons reading the text create their own interpretation of the context in which the document was produced.

Coding of Documents

As stated, once all the interviews were transcribed, a coding system was used to reference these documents, to ensure anonymity. This system entailed a three-digit

document identification alphanumeric code (i.e. D09). The letter at the beginning refers to the mission agency that the participant was from. This letter was assigned in alphabetical order corresponding to the order in which the interviews were conducted and was not, therefore, in any way representative of the mission agency with which the participant was associated. The number was also assigned accordingly, in the order in which the interviews were conducted. Participants were not aware of their position in that order, nor did the researcher disclose the names of the other participants. The alphanumeric codes were developed after the interviews and were used only by the researcher for the purpose of data analysis and reporting findings, in order to reference the interview transcript from which information was being drawn. All documents were checked for accuracy of document reference coding before importation into Nvivo.

Analysis of Data

In preparation for formal document analysis, all transcribed documents were checked twice through while listening to the audio microcassettes, to ensure accuracy. Some of the microcassette recordings were of higher sound quality than others, depending on background noise, as interviews were conducted in a variety of settings. As such, certain poorer audio recordings required several checks to ensure that the transcripts matched the audio recordings perfectly. Another purpose for repeated listening and reading of transcripts was to allow themes to arise from the documents, rather than imposing preconceived categories upon them (Siedel, Friese and Leonard 1995, E9).

Constructed Reality

Since the researcher has to rely on the testimony of human beings, it is important to understand that what really happened in each person's experience is an interpretive act due to values, biases, and personalities. A second layer of the interpretive act is in the mind of the human researcher, who chooses to highlight or ignore data, then to interpret and organize data into different categories. This process is called a "constructed reality" and is a natural limitation in any study of this nature (Borg, Gall, and Borg 1996, 644).

Free Nodes

This constructed reality began by recognition – through listening, reading and re-reading – of themes, categories and patterns. It involved analyzing what was being read, thus enabling the researcher to make "discoveries" about the phenomenon being investigated (Seidel, Friese and Leonard 1995, E5). Each document was encoded, with axial coding, using Nvivo's free nodes, which served to summarize, synthesize and sort the observations made, becoming the primary path to data analysis (Seidel, Friese, and Leonard 1995, E5).

While reading and re-reading the ten documents, free nodes representing themes that had emerged were created and affixed. To do this, selected passages of each document were highlighted and given a short representative title or theme (Appendix 4), attaching these as free nodes to each highlighted area. With each document that was analyzed, the number of free nodes increased, as new themes emerged. Previously assigned free nodes that were applicable to the next document (i.e. individual call, Bible

college degree, etc.) were also re-used as necessary when highlighting passages from each document. The first couple of documents took the longest in attaching free nodes, as it was just the beginning and there were many new free nodes to be created. After the third or fourth documents were analyzed, there were many repetitions of free nodes, and the process became more efficient. At the end the free nodes that appeared just once or twice were evaluated as to whether they could be merged with another free node. If so, they were merged, if not they were kept separate. For a few free nodes that were very similar in terminology, these nodes were also merged together into one free node. Once all the documents were analysed and free nodes were attached, the complete list of free nodes was finalized. In total, 174 free nodes emerged from this process (Appendix 5). This completed the first step of the document analysis.

Tree Nodes

The second task was to organize and group the 174 free nodes into more manageable, logical categories, called tree nodes. Fifteen tree nodes emerged, were sorted chronologically and, coincidentally, evenly into groups of five, under three major headings (Appendix 6). These are as follows: under the first heading “Mission Field” there were five tree nodes: 1) call, 2) education, 3) spiritual gifts, 4) ministry and, 5) marriage. Under the second heading “Mission Leadership” there were five tree nodes: 6) proposal, 7) transition, 8) ethos, 9) status, and 10) longevity. Under the third heading “Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership” there were five tree nodes: 11) issues, 12) children, 13) resolution, 14) attitudes and, 15) advice.

In this systematic coding of documents the researcher attempted to remain true to what was in the transcripts from the interviews, in order to neutralize any potential biases which could be present due to the fact that the researcher in some cases had similar experiences to that of the participants. The 174 free nodes, grouped into 15 tree nodes, created a total of 191 nodes. These nodes, chronologically categorized under the three major headings, each with five sub-headings, served as the outline for the findings chapter. The conclusions in the final chapter also followed this order.

Search Procedure

The domain analysis began with a Boolean intersection search. The intersection allowed the researcher to systematically work through each set of tree nodes and pull the highlighted statements or passages of that node out of all the documents. Under the heading “Mission Field” the first search was the tree node “call” and the scope of this search was 12 passages. The second search was the tree node “education” and the scope of the search was 31 passages. The third search was the tree node “spiritual gifts” and the scope of the search was 11 passages. The fourth search was the tree node “ministry” and the scope of the search was 39 passages. The fifth search was the tree node “marriage” and the scope of the search was 68 passages.

Under the heading “Mission Leadership” the sixth search was the tree node “proposal” and the scope of the search was 28 passages. The seventh search was the tree node “transition” and the scope of the search was 72 passages. The eighth search was the tree node “ethos” and the scope of the search was 80 passages. The ninth search was the

tree node “status” and the scope of the search was 80 passages. The tenth search was the tree node “longevity” and the scope of the search was 7 passages.

Under the heading “Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership” the eleventh search was the tree node “issues” and the scope of the search was 108 passages. The twelfth search was the tree node “children” and the scope of the search was 21 passages. The thirteenth search was the tree node “resolution” and the scope of the search was 103 passages. The fourteenth search was the tree node “attitude” and the scope of the search was 49 passages. The fifteenth search was the tree node “advice” and the scope of the search was 9 passages.

Report Procedure

The results of these fifteen tree node searches were generated into reports, which were printed into hard copies and placed in a binder for the exclusive use of the researcher. From each main tree node a text report was generated, revealing the actual statements made and categorized under each document. The number of documents referring to that particular intersection were noted, as well as the exact location (document and paragraph) and citation of the passage, making reference to that particular intersection of node and document.

Under “Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership,” the tree node “issues” included thirty nodes, which was the most out of all of them. In this one case, in order to better organize so many nodes, a node coding report was generated for each node, printed into a hard copy and placed into this section of the report binder.

Actual Findings

As stated, the findings were presented in chronological order under the major headings: Mission Field, Mission Leadership, and Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership. The tree nodes were presented in logical order – in some cases different than the order in which the reports were printed, since it was discovered through reading, re-reading and thoughtful analysis, that the findings should be reported in a more natural, logical order, in light of emerging themes. (Seidel, Friese, and Leonard 1995, E9). This revised sequence has already been reflected in the order in which the tree nodes appear above, and the order in which they appear in the report binder containing the hard copies that the researcher used for writing the findings chapter. In addition, the short one-word tree node categories that were assigned for Nvivo search purposes, were in some cases expanded for section titles in the findings, to more accurately reflect the information therein.

Employing the aforementioned coding system, statements and passages from the interview transcripts were documented using the coded document alphanumeric reference. These were followed by a comma and the exact passage number location in that document, and together the code appears in brackets, i.e. (D09, 15).

To further ensure anonymity, names of people, position titles, mission agencies, cities, years, numbers and other identifying information were replaced with generic information in square brackets []. In some cases, where phrases or sentences might have revealed identities, this information was replaced with three periods ... indicating a pause, while in other cases this same punctuation was employed to indicate the connection of

ideas that had interview questions or irrelevant information in between, or to shorten long monologues.

As much as possible, the actual words of participants were quoted. However, some statements were shortened, rephrased or summed up, especially for long interchanges between the interviewer and participant, or in cases where the actual quote might have revealed the identity of the person or their mission agency. Occasionally, words were added by the researcher in round brackets (), especially if they seemed to be intended but were dropped by the person or cut off by the interviewer, or simply could not be detected in the audio recording. At other times these round brackets with additional words were employed to make the statement more understandable if it was pulled out of a larger discussion.

Just as the terms “thesis,” “project” and “study” have thus far been used interchangeably, the terms “researcher” and “interviewer” are also used interchangeably with each other, as are the terms “participant,” “spouse,” “wife,” and “woman.”

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

Data were treated qualitatively, using computer data analysis software Nvivo to produce findings relative to the research question and subsidiary questions. Findings were inductively produced, as explained in chapter four, and are presented in narrative form. Structurally, data analysis uses the subsidiary questions as a guide to analyze data.

In this chapter the researcher presents findings under the headings Mission Field, Mission Leadership, and Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership. This structure represents a chronological progression through the participants' lives, following the format of the interviews and based on the questions that were posed to participants (Appendix 3).

Mission Field

Under the Mission Field heading, the findings were reported in the following categories: missionary call, education, spiritual gifts, ministry, and marriage and ministry ethos.

Missionary Call

One of the participants was called to be missionary as a child who was influenced toward missions through her favourite aunt, with whom she corresponded and to whom

she sent care packages containing bandages she had helped roll and little outfits she had helped make for babies (A06, 5). Several of the participants were called to be missionaries as teenagers, for example at summer camp (B02, 5), during a missions conference (D09, 5), through a Bible college presentation (A07, 6), and one as a teenager living with her parents on the mission field, seeing valleys filled with lost people who still needed to hear the message and realizing how small the missionary community was by comparison (B03, 9). One person responded to the call during Bible college (A01, 5), and one during seminary (E10, 13). One was called along with her husband, influenced by missionaries they met while working in secular careers overseas (C08, 24).

Education

Most participants had bachelors degrees from Bible colleges or Christian liberal arts colleges with the following majors: Bible and missions (A01, 50; F11, 48), nurses training (A06, 86), education (A07, 21), education and Bible (B02, 28), psychology (B03, 27), Christian education and intercultural studies (D09, 29). One participant completed a bachelors in psychology at a secular university (E10, 25). Two attended secular colleges: early childhood education (F11, 26), teacher's training and music (C08, 21).

Four participants attended seminary: one-year masters degrees (E10, 36; F11, 28), one-year masters in professional studies (B02, 54), two years of studies toward a masters degree (B03, 70).

Almost all of the participants reported studying a foreign language on the mission field (A01, 152; A06, 137; A07, 242; B02, 139; B03, 111; D09, 167; E10, 48; F11, 86). A couple of them also went on to study a tribal language (A01, 162-164; B02, 143).

Spiritual Gifts

Several of the participants talked specifically about their spiritual gifts for ministry: teaching (A01, 76, 416; A07, 48, 275; A06, 211; E10, 176-182), preaching (A07, 107), administration (A01, 330-334; A07, 512-516; B05, 129-131; F11, 441), hospitality (A06, 247-253; B02, 161, 196, 200, 222; B03, 270; E10, 90; F11, 321-325, 562), encouragement (A01, 1085, 1097; B02, 434) and mercy (A06, 211; F11, 562). Some of the participants were hesitant to specify their spiritual gifts, and instead moved on to talk about their ministries overseas.

Ministry

Several of the participants taught various subjects in Bible institutes: church history (A01, 76; A06, 179), denominational history (A06, 179), Bible courses (A01, 164), marriage and family (A01, 416), classes for women (B02, 196), and literacy classes (A01, 255). One woman recounted how she and her husband took trips into the interior – up to the mountains and down to the jungle areas, holding a short-term Bible school where she taught and also functioned as a nurse. She relished these experiences and appreciated the dual role, in order for her to use her training and skills (A06, 196-207). She said that teaching was very exciting “because you thought you were doing something that was meaningful and you met so many people and we were involved in so many peoples’ lives” (A07, 275). Similarly, another woman explained travelling as a team with her husband, riding motor bikes all across [the country], through rainy seasons, bringing all their books and going through passes, teaching 100 students. In words almost

identical to the above, this woman expressed that it was exciting, “because you thought you were doing something that was meaningful and you met so many people and we were involved in so many peoples’ lives” (A07, 276).

Several other participants were involved in church planting, and one specified that this included extending hospitality (the church facility was built onto their home), and also teaching Sunday school, playing guitar and visiting neighbours (E10, 90). Another woman explained how, in her early years of church planting, since she had young children herself and there was a need, she taught children’s church, “so my kids have memories of that, (so) that they could at least know what was going on by pictures, and it was a good stretching experience (for me)” (B03, 135-145). In addition to church planting, when this woman became proficient in the language she was involved with the translation of theological education materials into the foreign language (B03, 184). Another woman said, “our focus was on language, and the orientation program we gave more attention (to) administratively, and also with the church plant, and then the opportunity came up for teaching English as a second language” (D09, 168). She later expanded, “as far as the church plant went, I assisted in the Sunday school program that was developing, and then in time we held late high school/college age kids small groups” (D09, 196).

Other participants reported that they had been involved in a variety of ministries: women’s ministries (A01, 255); dorm parenting (E10, 29); an orphanage (F11, 110); teaching music at a mission school (C08, 32); and having a discipleship ministry on a university campus (C08, 32).

As alluded to above, many of the participants were also involved in hospitality ministries – hosting meals and overnight stays for individuals (nationals and missionaries) and short term mission groups (B02, 161, 196; E10, 90; A06, 247; C08, 32; F11, 146; B03, 264, 270). One participant reported, “I counted during one period of time we were averaging 100 people a month” (A06, 247-253). Another exclaimed, “it was huge, we rarely had a meal by ourselves!” (B02, 200), and another said, “it (hospitality) really did fit there, and our noon table ... we never knew how many people were going to be there, we just knew we’d all be there to eat together” (B03, 264).

A couple of the participants specifically stated that they had nannies for their children while they were in language school (B03, 151-153, D09, 182-184). After language school, one participant said she had helpers who did cooking and cleaning (B03, 155-157). Another participant said that domestic help freed her to teach (A06, 243). One participant expressed that with all her teaching and hospitality ministries she wouldn’t have survived without house help (B02, 155), and told how she managed two full-time house helpers which she preferred to train herself, stating “that was a big time-investment but the dividends were amazing” (B02, 200).

Two participants said they were able to travel and minister because their children were away at MK (missionary kids) boarding school (B02, 192; E10, 133). One said that she was on the board at her children’s MK school (E10, 133). A couple women expressed that because their ministry was home-based, they were able to balance motherhood and ministry (B03, 286-290; E10, 90).

Participants reported that their field ministry was: very satisfying (A01, 682); that it allowed them to use their ministry gifts (E10, 166-170); and that it was positive, fulfilling and exhausting (A07, 279-283). Another woman expressed a similar sentiment, laughing as she recalled that in addition to daily hospitality ministry, teaching children's church and translating theological materials, "they put me on a language committee for helping new missionaries who were in language study, and I helped rewrite language manuals ... all this in our first term – what were they thinking?!" (B03, 176). As if to compare her ministry as a missionary to her present situation, another participant recalled that "they actually were very affirming of me in [Country]. I didn't have any sense of feeling that they didn't appreciate who I was" (A07, 295). Another woman said that she was very fulfilled in ministry on the mission field, summarizing her tales of adventure with the statement, "they were wonderful years" (B02, 214-216).

One participant who had talked very enthusiastically about her teaching ministry, later referred to her husband becoming the field leader. The interviewer asked if she had assisted him in that, and she responded:

No, actually when you are the [field leader] he does that and the lady looks after the guest house, that's her job. So I did think they were unethical. So at those times I would have [topic] seminars in the guest house and [title] and [title] meetings, which had never been done before, and I don't think they all appreciated it. But I thought, hey, let's use it for all the purposes that we can ... that was what I enjoyed the most. I loved doing [topic] seminars and [topic]. (A07, 334-344).

Only one participant reported that she was not able to find her niche in ministry or cope with life after redeployment to another area on their field (D09, 355-357, 405-412, 878).

Marriage and Ministry Ethos

There were many, many free nodes grouped into this tree node category. For most of their ministries participants spoke in the plural “we” and many specifically stated that they were involved in the same sphere as their husbands, for example in the Bible training, where couples would coordinate their classes and travel together to teach, as described earlier (A01, 193, 300; A06, 196-207; A07, 276). One woman said, “for five years we lived on the university campus involved in discipling and evangelism and discipleship with students” (C08, 32).

Another participant told how she worked alongside her husband, who was the assistant field leader then later became the field leader (A01, 229-233, 261-267). She said she always felt part of what he did and that they led as a couple, with the field office in their home and her serving as the bookkeeper (A01, 318-334). Two other women explained that when their husbands were field leaders they travelled as a couple to visit and minister to all their missionaries each year (A07, 354-360; B02, 188). One of these women said that she was also involved in field committees, specifying that due to policy as a spouse of a member on the field leadership committee she was not eligible to be on that committee, but her husband would “always have me on different committees, like chairman of the [title] committee, or [title], or [title]” (A07, 295).

One woman and her husband went on to co-lead their missionaries on a whole continent, emphasizing that they were referred to as regional leadership *couples*, which had been established several years earlier in their mission agency. She referred to this change in policy as “a huge transition, where these couples really, really work together”

(B02, 238, 651-655). She explained how each couple has their own chemistry and decides how they will share the responsibilities, stating that there is a lot of freedom and that they “really work very closely together” (B02, 657-671). (She re-emphasized this point in contrast with the roles of the spouses at their agency headquarters in North America). Back in her days as regional leadership couple with her husband, she recalled travelling and visiting fields in their region and her having a specific role at their denominational conferences and seminars in North America – planning events representing their continent and meeting with furloughing missionaries (B02, 681-685). One other woman spoke of her *husband* becoming a regional leader in their mission, specifying that he was the one with the title, but going on to explain everything related to that role using “we,” indicating that she had worked closely alongside him in this ministry (C08, 40).

After explaining their church planting ministry based out of their home, another participant summarized, “it was a typical church planting activity, but we both did it” (E10, 90). Later when this woman was asked to describe their marriage and ministry ethos, her answer was “we did Bible studies together ... I really enjoy serving with [my husband] in Bible studies, and just as a team” (E10, 150, 174). Others involved in church planting similarly expressed how they “have always worked together in ministry” (B05, 111), and spoke of extending hospitality as a couple: “having people in became a huge part of our ministry together ... it was a part of who we are” (B03, 264, 270).

When asked if they as a couple enjoyed working together on the mission field, one woman responded, “I loved it, we always get along so good ... he had an office, I had an

office across the hall ... everything worked well” (A01, 344-356). Other women also expressed that they functioned well together with their husbands: “we feed off each other” (B03, 598); “I felt we were partners a whole lot” (A06, 94-96); “in most of our overseas work, the ministry of working in discipling was very much working together ... it was a discipling ministry that we were in together and we loved it together” (C08, 48).

This woman also added:

Actually, for about four years within the missions structure, I was my husband’s boss it just worked out that way because I was on a leadership team and had responsibilities for about [number of] missionaries and so it just happened that my husband was in that stream and there were different teams in it and I was just responsible for all of those teams(C08, 56, 60)

When asked if that was okay between the two of them, she responded, “yes, never any problem, and it wasn’t a problem for the mission, that’s never been an issue” (C08, 65).

Later she returned to this subject, re-emphasizing, “we have women leaders, married women with children whose husbands are doing other things in the mission” (C08, 65, 245).

Several participants expressed how their husbands valued them, for example, “he always wanted to support me in whatever ... if I wanted to study more, if I wanted to work, he encouraged me” (A06, 284). The woman who had struggles integrating after a re-assignment on their field, resulting in the family’s return to North America, said, “I pulled my husband out of that, where he was so effective (on the mission field) but he never made me feel (guilty) ... he said we made this decision together, he really was and is very supportive” (D09, 560-564). Another participant who felt highly valued by her husband stated:

He always thought it was valuable for me to read his letters, to make sure they were sensitive enough, and big picture people sometimes don't think of the little feelings and details along the way, and I was always glad to help him in those ways. And he was always helping me, to encourage me to do well in areas where I didn't feel strong enough or equipped enough, but he'd say if this is where God wants you to work, if this is where you feel you have a passion for, then just do it, and I'll back you ... and (he) encouraged me to places of learning, to equip me. (A07, 137, 141)

Regarding their partnership in ministry ethos, this woman said: “[husband's name] and I, from the very beginning of our marriage, have always wanted to work as a team because we complement one another. [Husband's name] is a big picture person and I am a detailed person” (A07, 127). She continued:

Because God made you that way, with some strengths and some weaknesses that need to be complemented ... if you have a good staff or whatever, they can perhaps meet those needs, but knowing each other well over the years you can see where some of the things, you need to be there ... yes, working together, I think it is stronger when we do that, don't you find? (A07, 143-153)

After recounting how they had worked this way for many years, ministering side-by-side on the mission field, she referred to the year her husband served as field leader: “but that was one of our years that we felt that we didn't work together, as he had the responsibilities in his work, and I was quite busy doing the guest house, so I thought that that was one of our years that we didn't quite have that same team work that we usually had” (A07, 352). Later, she said of her husband that, “... he felt strongly that we should work as a team, we always worked as a team ... he believed strongly in that and maybe that's why I am so strong in it too. It affirms women” (A07, 793, 813).

Mission Leadership

Under the Mission Leadership heading, findings were reported in the following categories: proposal, transition, mission agency ethos, status and role, and longevity.

Proposal

For almost all of the participants, when asked how the proposal of mission leadership in North America was made, they responded that it had come through a personal conversation, phone call or letter to their husbands (A01, 587; A06, 406; A07, 381; B02, 244-250, 465; B03, 217; B05, 32; D09, 590; E10, 204, 210-212). One woman seemed defensive, emphasizing, “it wasn’t a position that, it wasn’t something that they asked me about and I didn’t even expect that, except that he and I would talk about moving if they wanted us to do that. We made decisions together, but it was his decision” (E10, 232). Conversely, another woman said that during the phone call to her husband, the person at the other end of the conversation “so much affirmed my role in that,” and that he had “told [husband’s name] that we are calling you also because of your wife and this needs to be communicated right from the start” (B05, 38-47). She later said “[mission leader’s name] is a former missionary himself, he understands that ethos of couples working together ... he and his wife have that ethos too” (B05, 121-123).

Two participants explicitly stated that the proposal had been made to both of them as a couple. The first explained, “they presented it to the both of us, we always sat together during these times and definitely it was a position we both have to engage in and be part of” (F11, 208). The second proudly asserted, “this is the same right across the board in [mission agency], we at leadership level deal with couples and the wife is always

included ... they had written to both of us and from the very first move into leadership until today they started to talk to us about moving into senior leadership within the mission ... so of the [number of] years that we've been in senior leadership I have been 100% included in everything" (C08, 81-85).

For those participants who were not included in the initial proposal, a few of the participants quickly followed up their response by explaining how their husband had immediately shared it with them (A01, 633; B03, 222). One woman repeated, "so at that point they asked him, they communicated that to him, well, I mean obviously I was in it with him ... because the job was in [North American city]" (B02, 244-250).

When asked how much time the couple was given to consider and pray about the proposal, several participants had a similar response: "a few days" (B05, 32); "not very long ... maybe two or three days" (A07, 385); "um, like three days" (B03, 230); "the next morning" (B02, 487). A few of them stated that the reason for the urgency was due to a sudden vacancy in the North American mission agency headquarters (A01, 591; B03, 217; D09, 490). For one the transition had been immediate, as they were already in North America, but she emphasized that "it was a huge upheaval in our lives" (B02, 473). Another said, "it was such a whirlwind, I mean, we were gone within thirty days (B03, 318). A third woman said that from the time her husband had been interviewed, the whole transition happened within the space of a few months. (D09, 590)

In regard to whether there had been any communication from the mission about the implications of the proposal for them as spouses, the responses were: "I hadn't really thought about it. Um, no, not that I recall ... I don't remember any discussion about what

the wife does” (B03, 294, 314); “no, I don’t think so” (A06, 432); “um, that came later” (E10, 247); “no ... no, no” (B02, 517-521); “no, no ... for him there was a job description but not for me” (A01, 692, 704). Another elaborated:

They did a long interview of us, a very long interview. I think it was the whole board ... they asked us questions, they asked [husband’s name] most of the questions, but they did ask me a few and, yeah, they didn’t tell me what my role would be. I don’t think they thought they were hiring me at all. (A07, 425-429)

Even so, this woman added that the denominational president at that time kept saying that the wife was a very important part of this, and that he wanted both of them to visit all the fields in the first two years (A07, 437).

For at least two of the participants for whom the proposal was clearly being made to their husband alone, the only real implication for them from the standpoint of the mission agency was to ensure their acceptance of that arrangement. The first said:

They asked me for my thoughts as to whether I was prepared for what this role would mean ... in terms of travel, and that was the key to it, that he would be on the road a lot because he would be the face. He would be speaking and getting to know things, because he was the new guy. It would mean a lot of travel. (D09, 594-598)

The second participant, the one who seemed to defend her mission agency by saying that she would never have expected for them to include her in the proposal anyhow, said that she and her husband “talked about what kind of career would I like to start, another career, and we talked about various possibilities” (E10, 337). At the same time, she emphasized that “the (mission agency) board was very careful and compassionate to me. We had an excellent board and when [husband’s name] was asked to let his name stand for [mission leader position] they made sure that I was in on the process” (E10, 409).

Although they were not interested in her for any official position or role, she seemed to feel cared for on a personal level, and once again defended her agency saying, “they interviewed me personally. They have also taken me out for lunch since, two times at least, to find out how I’m doing, so they were very kind and careful not to ignore me or my needs” (E10, 413).

Regarding the couple’s response to the proposal, one participant exclaimed “at first we said, “no, thank you – why did we learn the language and finally get to know what we are doing?!” (B03, 222). This same woman recalled:

And then there were a few phone calls back and forth and it really came down to, we had originally put ourselves under the [mission agency] for direction you know as missionaries with the [mission agency] ... and basically that was the final reason we came back. They felt strongly when we gave all the reasons why we shouldn’t be doing this, they had their reasons why we should and [denominational president] at some point said, “but I’ve looked around the world and this is what I think and so I think you are really God’s man for this time.” If it’s really God’s person then probably we should go, but we didn’t feel like we were. (B03, 244-248)

Similarly, another participant said:

We could not share it (the proposal) with anyone except [names] and we went to a room and just sobbed and cried our hearts out to God, and asked for his wisdom, and felt that if he was asking us to do this, we needed to be willing ... that God works through the people in authority over us ... but it was a really hard time ... we were going [husband’s name] was going to be leading his colleagues. (B02, 495-499).

Transition

One of the participants said that during the transition whenever her husband talked to the denominational president he would ask, “what will be [wife’s name’s] role?” (A01, 708), to which the response was, “I hope she will be free to travel with you” (A01, 712).

This wife elaborated in a somewhat sarcastic tone, “you know, because that enhances your role when you are going to be with missionaries over there, and going to see where they are working, to have your wife along would enhance your ... if she’s there to talk to some women or whatever, I don’t know” (A01, 716). Although expressed in a different tone, this was a similar expression to that mentioned by another woman in the section above, who said the denominational president expressed the importance of the wife, especially in travelling with the husband to visit all the fields (A07, 437).

The researcher asked the participants if the organization did anything to offer them help, guidance or care during the transition. One woman answered:

We were well cared for. They basically gave us retirement allowance so they allowed us to ship a number of things back, so we felt very cared for. And that was [mission leader’s name] because who he is, he cares for the people who are on his team, and we felt that very much, that sense of care, that support. (B05, 63)

Another participant spoke of a woman who helped her through: “well, the previous mission leader’s wife was very supportive and the [mission leader’s] wife, [name], she met with me every month or what could be two months for awhile ... she was very nice, she encouraged me” (D09, 662, 682).

In response to the above question, another participant replied, “no, I wouldn’t say there was any intentional member care” (B02, 585). However, she had mentioned earlier:

The only thing that I remember was that the wife of the couple that were asking us to come back ... wrote me a letter and told me how hard it was going to be and really did express some sensitivity ... she had a support group for all of us wives, every month and that was huge because we all got together (B02, 306)

She mentioned this woman again later, saying, “I think that I probably felt care from her.

I knew I could talk with her openly because I knew her well and we’d been in that

[regional leadership] job for [number of] years and she had been somewhat of a mentor and encouragement” (B02, 593). When asked if she felt other people in the organization understood the transition she was going through, she said, “I don’t know. I think that everybody was just trying to survive themselves because it was a lot of change for them as well” (B02, 627-629). Referring back to the group of wives that still meet, she re-emphasized, “that’s been, I think, probably more of a therapy than we even realized, and a real blessing, it really has” (B02, 633).

Regarding what her role would be after the transition, one participant said:

I don’t remember talking about it, and it may have been partly because it was such a whirlwind. I mean, we were gone within thirty days. That meant transitioning all of our ministries – and we were in these varied ministries – over to other people so that they just didn’t fall through the cracks, and packing our stuff, and getting the kids prepared, it was a huge shock for them. (B03, 318)

During this transition, she said:

I remember I was thrilled when I got a card from [mission leader’s wife] ... saying we are really excited that you will be coming to join our team ... that was huge to me, it was wonderful, like, oh somebody knows I’m coming to [mission agency headquarters]. (B03, 302, 306, 310)

She said there was nothing communicated about guidelines for spouses but, similar to her colleague above, added that the mission leader’s wife:

... was good at getting the [mission agency] wives together once a month and so that was a connection that kept at least the wives aware of each other ... so that was very helpful, to have someone, you know even if you are involved in a Bible study in the church or whatever, it’s not the same as people who really know what you are going through and whatnot. (B03, 386, 405)

Another participant said that discussions in the transition happened only between her and her husband, adding, “I don’t ever remember talking to anyone else, but I think our

member care was not very strong back then” (E10, 353). Diverting the focus off herself, she mentioned other former missionary spouses of mission leaders whom she knew of, saying, “there were at least two people who did not go through that transition well” (E10, 361). She went on to tell the story of one of them:

She was just shocked. At that point [mission agency] had the policy that the spouse could not work at the office ... [woman’s name] was devastated with, she was like me, had done all of these ministries with her husband and now all of a sudden she has no ministry, she has no place. You should probably talk to her! (E10, 369, 375)

Later, she mentioned, as stated earlier, that the board was very careful and compassionate to her, and she agreed with the interviewer’s suggestion that this was a form of member care (E10, 409-417).

Another participant summed up her transition struggles by stating, “it hasn’t been a good transition for me, this coming to [North American city]. Whose fault is that? Probably, basically, my own” (A01, 255). She didn’t want to put any blame on the member care department, saying:

Maybe it was just my fault. I just should have gone to [member care person] and said, “you know I’m really struggling here,” but I’d never sought people’s help that way because I’ve been a pretty whole person, and so for me it was something completely new to have to seek, or to feel that maybe I needed to seek some help, so I didn’t. (A01, 842)

In contrast to all of this was the participant who emphasized that she was included in everything right from the start. In response to a question about how she felt during the transition and whether they had member care people, she retorted, “Yup! I can only speak for myself, I never struggled with transitions of any kind ... with all our transitions we had nothing but the most fabulous support and we have it today from our most senior members of the board” (C08, 179, 182).

The other participant who was also included in the proposal (which would actually mean communal living on a compound in North America) when asked if she was offered member care in the transition, answered:

Um, another weak point with [mission agency], one thing we try to do better now, I mean we've recognized the need for it. I think a lot of our staff here, yeah, they would be, since we were living so closely together and working closely together, you assume you know people, and not really spending concerted time to sit and chat and ask how you are doing. That wasn't done. (F11, 394)

When asked if they have a member care person, she answered:

We do now, not here on staff, but for working internationally we do, and then each sending base has a sort of a link person, and that's basically [husband's name] and I, and we try to look after the member care of our staff but for us as leaders, that's where the weakness is a little bit. We do have a member care couple who is supposed to look after us, but we don't see them very often. (F11, 403)

When questioned as to whether she had sensed any member care from this couple during the transition, she replied, "no, not at first, but they are becoming more involved, but that's because of [husband's name's] push to involve them and to make them more aware, and to push for more meetings and that type of thing" (F11, 415).

Mission Agency Ethos

For some of these participants, the ethos of their mission agency came through clearly in a policy preventing them as spouses from working at the mission agency office. For example, one participant stated "I knew that I wouldn't be at the office, by that time I already knew that I couldn't get a job there ... I'm pretty certain I knew that before we took the job, that I wouldn't be able to work at the office" (A01, 732, 740). She explained that this was a new policy that had just recently at that time been put into place

by the new denominational president (A01, 744, 760-766). She said that her husband had tried on her behalf to talk to the policy-enforcing vice-president, but in spite of that the policy had remained unchanged (A01, 857). When the interviewer asked how else the agency had encouraged her involvement, ministry or valued –” she cut in, “I don’t know. I don’t think they have. I don’t want to be down on them but I don’t think they recognize that there are people like me and [woman’s name]” (A01, 994).

Another participant from the same mission agency recalled that before the new president and the restrictive policy came in:

There was a real family atmosphere at [mission agency office] ... it was a very different atmosphere to what it is now ... I felt very welcome. If there was a shower, the girls at the office would invite all the wives, if it was a baby shower, wedding shower, staff retreats – we got invited to all the staff retreats. There was fewer people then and there was a family atmosphere and I feel now that the staff has gradually grown bigger and there are more people with particular backgrounds are working there, it has changed more, what would you call it, into a corporate atmosphere, and it’s much colder now. (A06, 540-548)

She also mentioned that the office situation had been very flexible when she was working there (prior to the new policy) and travelling with her husband: “I think it was because I was working part time, I was able to cover it you know, get it done. There was flexibility there. I don’t think I ever didn’t do my work, I managed to do it” (A06, 628). This woman retraced her own experience in the changing atmosphere, from the time when she used to work in the office: “during that time, the atmosphere in the office was gradually changing and whereas at first it was very friendly and family-oriented, then it became more corporate and it was becoming, I felt, more and more frowned on for the wife to be there ... I sensed that” (A06, 608-612). She later elaborated:

We were not able to work in our husband's department ... I felt that some of the girls at the office, I am sure, resented the fact that they couldn't work in certain areas ... I was very happy back in my little corner ... we got along fine and we loved working together, but I thought more and more that, at the time, it was being said more and more that family members with children, that family members should not work there, so I just had this feeling and so I just put in my resignation ... also because I thought the policy was changing and so I didn't want to disrupt the policy ... they hadn't announced it, but prior to that some of the children, teenagers, were brought in to help with mailings and things, and it was said that they should not be brought in anymore, so they didn't say anything to me, but I just felt it was a fact you know. (A06, 620, 691, 703, 709)

When asked to what she attributed the change in atmosphere, this woman responded, "it wasn't the location. It was, at first just about everyone there had been in ministry you know, and I think more and more people came from an executive world and they expected the office to be run that way" (A06, 640-645).

Another participant also spoke of earlier days in the mission agency, saying "the atmosphere was good, it was really good ... I loved work, I loved being there, yes it was a wonderful time ... it was positive. We all got along very well, I really have to say that" (A07, 579-588). Regarding the inclusive atmosphere in the mission agency, she said "at that time it was really good. They wanted me to be involved. They were always asking me to do different things, and teach this seminar and teach that seminar, and so it was good" (A07, 545). She then recounted the change:

There was a different atmosphere ... a lot of changes. Our philosophy of ministry and our philosophy of leadership are very different. [Husband's name] believes strongly in servant leadership and that he wants to equip and let people be leaders, empower them to do their job, and that's a different philosophy to what there is there now ... not compatible at all because it is totally opposite, it's not hierarchy. We were trying to level it out, but now it's come right back. (A07, 741, 745, 751)

A participant from another mission agency explained her situation: "you could work in the office if you weren't in the same division as your spouse, that was the rule"

(B03, 459). When asked if that is still the rule, she answered “I’m not sure if it is a written rule. It’s broken quite frequently if it is the rule. I don’t know what the rule is”

(B03, 465). When asked if there was any other encouragement for involvement or participation, this woman seemed to draw a blank, and all she could think of is that the wives are invited to “the once a year Christmas party” (B03, 447), to which the interviewer said, “okay, so not really,” and the woman agreed, “not really” (B03, 451), adding that “they just didn’t think about it, I don’t think it was deliberate, they just didn’t think about it” (B03, 455).

Referring back to when she and her husband first moved to the mission agency headquarters, the participant who had discussed with her husband other career options explained:

At that point, [mission agency] had the policy that the spouse could not work at the office, at the same office. Now since then, and maybe because of that and other cases, that has been changed. We do not work in the same department, but there are many couples that work in the office now. Whether that’s good or bad, that’s what has changed. (E10, 369)

When asked why they do not work in the same department, she replied, “I think that is sort of understood. I’m not sure what the policy is” (E10, 583). She explained that their mission agency tries not to put wives in areas close to their husbands, but commented “now [another mission agency], interestingly enough, the leaders’ wives are their secretaries ... I don’t think that would work with [our mission agency], well, it wouldn’t work with us” (E10, 587, 591). When the interviewer prodded for clarification, asking “with you as a couple?” this woman snapped, “a person” (E10, 595). A little confused, but sensing she was not referring to herself, the interviewer prodded again suggesting,

“your personnel person wouldn’t approve of that?” and she answered, “well, I think it’s probably an unwritten policy. It’s not a written one” (E10, 597, 599). Later, when asked about the work environment since wives could now work there she said, “it’s very positive, yeah, ... [mission agency headquarters] is so much more relaxed and friendly now, a whole new atmosphere. The kids come and go. Any kids that have parents that work there are very welcomed ... and there’s a good, open atmosphere” (E10, 656, 786-790).

Another participant emphasized that team-building is a high priority in their mission agency, and that when [regional leadership couples] come to town, all the wives at the headquarters are invited to everything, and they are trying to make it a real community (B02, 962-976). The woman who spoke of being included in everything and highly cared for by the board, also mentioned that when the board meets the wives are invited to the meals and to participate in discussions (C08, 208). Regarding accountability she said that, along with her husband,

They invite me into the meetings and they ask very, very serious questions, member care questions ... accountability, and the kind of things they deal with is, “Are you bringing your work home? How are you managing financially, personally? Are we getting the time we need with our families? ... What kind of holiday schedule have we managed to fit it in?” And the context of that meeting was holidays of two or three days ... at the end of a business trip, and they said, “Not sufficient, we do not accept that as a holiday. We don’t want to see you again until you sort it out that you have two weeks together, fourteen days consistently, nothing to do with work. (C08, 190-194)

The interviewer summarized, “okay, so they are caring for you,” and the woman asserted “absolutely ... and we are good friends and we are very aware that if we are in trouble in any way ... if there were legal problems or financial issues in the mission or whatever, we

could go to them in a moment's notice and trust them" (C08, 198, 202). The researcher clarified, "and they would be willing to be involved?" and the woman emphasized again, "absolutely" (C08, 208).

Regarding the family-friendly atmosphere of her mission agency, the above participant explained:

We just had a major change in [mission agency] to much younger leadership, which has been totally positive, totally supported by the mission, and totally supported by senior leadership who are older and who have moved on to other assignments, some are getting into their 60s. We now have leadership in their 40s, so we did have this international leadership retreat and two homeschooling families came with us. The children were provided with a place to study during the day and all the equipment which was needed. And all of the children who are in school here in our area, one mom stayed back and brought all the children up on the Friday and we continued with them until the Saturday, but we took lots of time with them, with the kids. And the whole of Sunday morning service, the kids led the service, so we included them. (C08, 167)

When the interviewer restated, "so there's a real family ethos in the mission," this woman agreed, "yes, that's it – that's with younger leaders with children, we have to be family compatible ... we are working very seriously at that" (C08, 171, 175). She added later, "I think we have a [chairperson of board] and she's a woman and she's [a seminary professor] ...and I believe her and a few other ladies have a very significant role on the board and they set the ethos in the mission" (C08, 212).

Another participant spoke of the family atmosphere in her mission agency, which was largely due to their offices and living space being all together in one facility – including living quarters for two families, some staff, candidates who come for several months of orientation, and furloughing missionaries who are required to come for debriefings (F11, 303-309). They eat supper together five days a week, with all the kids

too – a real family kind of atmosphere (F11, 313-317). She explained that couples (and their families) being fully engaged in the work is part of the ethos of their mission agency (F11, 205-216). Likewise, when the interviewer commented that it sounded like an atmosphere of inclusion where wives are very welcomed to be as involved as they can be, this woman assured, “oh definitely, yes, definitely” (F11, 299-301).

Status and Role

Regarding status, one participant explained:

We realized when we came home from the mission field that we were giving up our missionary status, we realized that ... I must say, it was hard. Obviously we had made the choice to work at home but still it was hard, there was the emotional aspect of giving that up. (A06, 436- 440)

Later, regarding her role, this woman suggested, “I don’t think I realized until we moved here how it would affect me” (A06, 463). When asked if there were any guidelines for her role she said, “no, there wasn’t ” (A06, 457-459). When posed another way, regarding what her husband’s role meant for her, she said “I went to [mission agency conferences] with him” (A06, 524). She had also mentioned earlier going to staff retreats (A06, 378). This woman and her husband had initially transitioned from the mission field into church ministry in North America. Regarding that period of time she said, “I was in an important ministry at [church name], (but) I was no longer paid for it you know” (A06, 451). Once her husband transitioned to a leadership role in the mission agency, necessitating a move to another city, she recalled “I just assumed I would start up a ladies group (in the church) and I found out that he (the pastor) didn’t want a ladies group. He wasn’t into that at all you know ... everything was different, it was very different, and so I

really didn't have that much of a function there" (A06, 467-475). Later, she said, "... the pastor came to me one day and said he needed a secretary in the church office, so I worked in the church office for [number of] years, and it was fine, but it really wasn't...(A06, 509-512). She hesitated, and the interviewer suggested "administration isn't what makes you tick?" and she answered, "no ... I got involved, did the bulletins and learned how to work on a computer, but I wasn't in love with my job" (A06, 514-520).

In the days before the new policy was enacted, restricting spouses from working in the mission agency office, this woman had started volunteering and then it grew into a job there, which she did for a number of years (A06, 572, 596). When she began talking about this, her hitherto demure countenance suddenly burst into life as she exclaimed, "Oh I loved it! I read all the missionary prayer letters, I knew where every missionary was and what they were doing ... and I would write articles for the [mission agency]" (A06, 600, 604). Later, when she was no longer able to work there, she again sought a role elsewhere, saying "I did serve on [women's committee at church] so that gave me a little bit of a ministry, but I found it hard for [number of] years, for [number of] years (emphasis hers) not having a role" (A06, 481).

Another participant also spoke of the loss of missionary status:

When we worked with the [mission agency headquarters] I remember them taking our name off as missionaries. We weren't missionaries anymore, and it didn't affect [husband's name] because he had a role. And I know I had written articles on this, that our role is not our important thing, but it's our love and joy in Christ. But nevertheless, a missionary is a big part of my whole being from a way back, and to have that removed was very sad for me, and I thought could they not leave us as associate missionaries or something ... it was a huge loss ... there was a bit of grieving that happened ... you never lose that call. (A07, 639-643, 653, 659)

This woman spoke in a positive way about her role travelling with her husband the first two years (A07, 441). However, beyond that she was uncertain about her future role:

I wasn't sure because [husband's name] worked such long hours and they are travelling so much. I thought I was never going to see him again. Oh, [denominational president] had said to me that if you want to work at the office you can ... it was (still) okay for spouses ... he didn't give any (restrictions). (A07, 488-500)

She also mentioned that she went to mission agency conferences and seminars, and said in regard to her role at those, "I usually teach," and she went on to explain the two areas in which she regularly provided instruction at various events (A07, 606-608). She stated in regard to her job in the mission agency office, "I never felt I could do my seminar material while I was working, so I still had to do all that separately" (A07, 559). When asked if she was remunerated for the seminars, she chuckled and answered, "no, no" (A07, 561-563).

The participant who had transition struggles due to the new policy preventing spouses from working in the mission agency office, stated that it also meant a loss of credentials with the denomination. The only way for her to retain her credentials would have been to work in an official capacity in another ministry of the denomination – in any case it still meant the loss of her status as a missionary. If she chose not to work in another ministry she would lose her credentials and therefore her voting privileges at denominational conferences, even though she was a spouse of one of the leaders. However, in her own mind she insisted that she still thought of herself as a missionary (A01, 768-782, 861-869). As to any other guidelines pertaining to her role she said, "no, no, no ... there are no guidelines, at least to my knowledge" (A01, 838, 1066-1070).

Regarding her unofficial status, this woman said “I don’t recall ever being told I wouldn’t be a part of the leadership team ... I assumed I would be a part of it, and I have been to a certain degree ... (but) there is some ambiguity there” (A01, 724-728). She had also thought that she would continue to be a partner in ministry with her husband, which she saw as part of her calling: “I thought it would continue and to a certain degree it has, but no, it’s changed, it’s changed ... as we got into the job and he was working there every day in the office, and I don’t know what’s going on ... once the house was set up, what do you do now?” (A01, 786-796, 800).

Summarizing the situation for herself and other wives in her mission agency, this woman said, “we lost our identity, in a sense, when our husbands joined the organization at the [mission agency headquarters] by them not allowing – and this has only just happened, [woman’s name] was able to work up until [number of] years ago ... until the policy changed” (A01, 998). When asked if her husband ever suggested her for other volunteer ministry roles, like teaching seminars (she had taught on the field) or speaking at mission-related events (she had spoken as a missionary) she responded, “where can I speak? Like, I don’t know where I’d be asked ... I don’t think it is known, I’m not known for that ... the people don’t know me here ... I’m not the kind of person that puts myself forward ... I won’t self-promote” (A01, 1026-1048).

The above loss of status and the resulting experience of role deprivation seemed to produce identity confusion in this woman, causing her to question her own call:

I’m not called to be an evangelist, I’m not called – I don’t even know if I’m called to be a teacher. I sometimes don’t even know what I’ve been called to ... it’s a nebulous role that I’m in. You don’t know where you fit. You’ve always fit with your husband ... and here, now you don’t fit with him, you do on a superficial

level with the travelling and the meetings and stuff, but just on the ongoing stuff I don't feel like I fit ... would it change if I had a job at the office? Even if I worked in [another department] how would it change? I still wouldn't be involved in what he's doing. (A01, 1082, 1269-1282)

This woman said that travelling with her husband was part of her role, again taking on a slightly sarcastic tone, "(it) comes by osmosis, comes with the fact that I'm the [mission leader's] wife and I am supposed to be there alongside him" (A01, 1074). When asked if this was something the organization saw value in, she said "I think (so), even though it is unspoken, it's not written anywhere, "take your wife with you because it is in our ethos and it looks better," I don't think it's ever stated" (A01, 946). When asked if she had any official function or ministry on the trips, she quickly retorted, "no, no" (A01, 946).

A fourth participant spoke about the loss of her missionary status saying, "it took me a while to figure that out ... yeah, I had been a [missionary title] then I wasn't a [missionary title] anymore with the [mission agency]. I didn't think I really realized that until I couldn't vote at [mission agency conference] ... when I was a missionary I could vote" (B03, 411-417). Speaking about her role she made the following comments: "I don't remember any discussion about what the wife does" (B03, 314); "I don't even remember wondering what I was going to do. I was so busy doing it – doing what it took to make the move and then a long time after getting here, I mean, finding a house and setting up and getting the kids in school" (B03, 344); "So for the first few years, [husband's name] role and mine, I hardly did anything related to his role. He did his role and I found my niche at church and getting into my kids' schools" (B03, 417); and "I

often felt disconnected with what [husband's name] was doing because he was just getting to know all these people, missionaries" (B03, 435). She later added:

I came into the office several times to help him when he was going through transition of the system, and he had to get special permission for me to come do it or I had to promise to do it without pay ... and I think a couple of times they figured that since I was working they could pay me a little. (B03, 496, 500)

She also said, "you know, I never felt deliberately pushed away" (B03, 489), and she re-emphasized the importance of the group of wives that met together saying, "I felt connected and up to date with what was going on even though I didn't, you know, I wasn't at the office all the time" (B03, 489). This woman eventually found a fulfilling job working at the office (which will be discussed under "resolution"), but it is very separate from what her husband is doing. Also, in regard to this couple's ministry of hospitality on the mission field, recalling her earlier comments about hospitality being a part of who they were, this woman stated "we don't do it as much in the [mission agency] role as we did in our other role" (B03, 264-278).

Regarding her status, another participant immediately recalled being at a mission agency conference and all of her colleagues (missionaries) were standing at the front being commissioned – her response to which she recalled with animation, "I was devastated!" The interviewer clarified, "that you weren't going back to the field?" and she replied gravely, "I was devastated. That is when it really hit me ... that's when the grieving probably began for me" (B02, 276-280, 290). Later she said:

I think it has been very hard for me when people have come for two or three years to [mission agency office] and then they move back to another ministry and they will say things like, "we are really excited to get back into real ministry" and that's been very hard for me. (B02, 774-783)

When asked about her role, this woman differentiated it from the former role she had shared with her husband in regional mission leadership – as stated earlier, she had said that these couples work very closely together. She now returned to that subject, adding that the regional leadership couples also have the freedom to divvy up responsibilities, summarizing, “there’s a different dynamic for them” (B02, 657-671). She recalled having a more defined role in that position, more contact with the missionaries, being a full partner in ministry, and feeling a part of what was going on (B02, 657, 681-685).

When asked if anything had been communicated to her about her new role, she answered, “no ... no, no” (B02, 515-521). In regard to guidelines for spouses she said “I don’t remember anything written about that, but that doesn’t mean there wasn’t anything” (B02, 370). She suggested that perhaps the information about her present role had come through her husband, who would ask and then come home and tell her (B02, 374).

As to the nature of her new role this woman recalled, “the first year was filled with getting settled into a new home, all the excitement of owning our (first) home ... and for getting our children settled in schools” (B02, 294). She then became very serious and went on to say, “the second year was my most traumatic year ... it was (the) second year when I really, really hit bottom” (B02, 272, 284). Later, she unpacked these statements: “The second year was hard when I realized that people didn’t need me ... but I was so needed in [country]. I did feel like [husband’s name] was still, he was even needed more now, and where do I fit? ... What am I going to do?” (B02, 799, 803). Without a role in the mission agency, this woman went “... jumping in with all fours to everything at church. No one told me that I should be careful, that I should pace myself, that I didn’t

have to prove anything because I was a missionary” (B02, 294). She also said, “I took a teaching job ... and I tried to maintain all of my other commitments, plus home, and I was totally overloaded, and my family was really getting the leftovers so they begged me to not teach the (next) year” (B02, 378). Shortly after the teaching ended, this woman worked for a few years in the mission agency and said she loved having the connection with the missionaries and being the advocate for missionary families, especially those who were trying to get forms completed for college entry in North America – she understood those challenges having been a missionary herself. But she lamented, “the pay was so pathetic. It was not worth my time, it really wasn’t ... (and) it ended up at the busiest time of year and spring break, and [husband’s name] was overseas on a trip and that was just not the best thing” (B02, 408).

Another participant said about her status, “when we came back I was not on the payroll ... I was no longer on missionary [support] ... but mind you I was coming home with a [young] baby, right? I wasn’t thinking, “oh, I’m not a missionary, what will I do?” I was just getting here to survive!” (B05, 51-63). Regarding her role and guidelines for spouses this woman said, “no, no guidelines, I wasn’t looking for it at that point” (B05, 89-93). The reason for this was that, in addition to having a baby, this woman said that in the first year, “all my energy went into renting a home, getting our things from [country] ... we were in survival mode ... and my husband gave me the job that year of finding a house to buy, he sent me to do that as he didn’t have time. So after [number of] months of renting, we bought a house, so we moved again” (B05, 63, 101).

When this woman was asked a second time about her role, she spoke of later starting to work with her husband, saying:

[mission leader] basically told his guys ... that they could give their assistants any work they wanted to. They could define the role ... which has really been fun because [husband's name] has wanted me to take on not just the administration, I learned that the first year, but he's wanted me to take on more of the role with women ... So I'm getting to interview women, I'm getting out to meet women, which I love ... all we are doing is actually splitting the cases. (B05, 135-150)

When the interviewer said, "it sounds like your organization has been very inclusive then in this role, and it has been helpful it sounds like to you," she replied enthusiastically, "Yeah, yeah" (B05, 227-229), and said that this inclusiveness had come from their 'boss', who is a former missionary himself and understands the ethos of couples working together, and his wife has that same ethos too (B05, 121-127).

The participant who had seemed defensive and evasive earlier, totally ignored the question about her status, snapping, "in any case, we would be moving back here and my career options needed to be discussed" (E10, 345). Later, in response to the question about guidelines for spouses she said "no, I don't think there were any policies and maybe there should be ..." (E10, 425). When asked if at any point her role was discussed with the mission, she replied, "no, maybe we should have, maybe we should have asked, I just didn't think it was necessary" (E10, 347-349). The reason for this response is likely the fact that right from the proposal there was no opportunity for continued status or a role in the mission agency. This is why, as mentioned earlier, when the proposal came to her husband the two of them discussed together what kind of new career she would like to start (E10, 337). As noted in the previous section, the ethos of this woman's mission

agency has changed in recent years, to where spouses are now able to work in the office, but in separate departments from their husbands (E10, 369). This participant also mentioned travelling with her husband as part of her role. When asked what her role is in that, and if she has any kind of formal ministry, she said, “no, I just go with him, and then if the women want to get together, we do and we talk together and pray and encourage each other ... I let the women in the ministry do most of the initiating ... I am just there to listen” (E10, 448-466).

Regarding the role of wives, another participant said:

I don't recall any policies ... they put no expectations on me ... they said, “we'd love to have you” ... “we understand you are in a different chapter of life than [former mission leader's wife] was, and we don't want you to feel that pressure to do what she did,” and it was kind of, you know, “we want you to be welcome to serve in whatever capacity you feel you can manage and you're welcome to do that.” Now, [former mission leader's wife] specifically asked me if I'd be interested in taking over that [title of ministry] and developing it, which in the end I agreed to, thinking that that was something that wasn't too big and something I could do from home. So that's been my main connection with developing the team of players. (D09, 700)

When asked if there would be any limitations from the mission side, this woman said “no, I don't sense that at all. They'd be happy to have me participate in any way I can” (D09, 761-763).

Although opportunities seemed to be wide open to her, this woman made several statements that showed some role confusion, perhaps still struggling with low self-esteem as a result of being, as she put it, “devastated” by how their mission field experience had ended. This was the woman who was not able to cope on the field, necessitating a return to North America with her husband and children, where he was initially offered a support

role at the mission office but soon thereafter, due to a sudden vacancy, was promoted to mission leadership (D09, 731). Throughout the interview this woman made self-effacing comments such as, “yeah, I think they are actually better than me in leadership, among other things” (D09, 247); “no, that would have been too intimidating for me” (D09, 395); I did do a couple of speaking engagements when we were first back, speaking to a ladies group or whatever – I didn’t enjoy that so much” (D09, 814); “how could (they) possibly be looking at us for this role? I didn’t doubt that this was from Him, even though I felt completely inadequate” (D09, 731); “... this job is bigger than either one of us, it is so much more demanding and stressful than we knew” (D09, 759). Regarding the future, once her children get older and she is more free to be involved, she said with note of excitement in her voice, “yeah, I know the opportunity would be there, and especially if it meant travelling together with him, to kind of serve together, I would embrace that” (D09, 813).

In response to the question about her status, another participant asserted, “in our organization we are still classified as full time missionaries on home staff” (F11, 257).

When asked about precedent, policies, role or a job description, she answered:

There are policies, I mean, well, how do I say, in our [policy manual name] it does say that both, if it is a married couple being asked for a position of leadership, offered a position of leadership, they both have to accept it and both play major roles ... I mean, how they sort out those roles is up to them ... according to their abilities and their family needs ... usually the leadership role is the husband and wife. I can’t think of any time when just the wife was considered for leadership and not the husband. (F11, 218-220, 224-232, 475)

In regard to what her own role would be, this woman said “I think for me in particular, I was more concerned for my children than I was about the next step (for me) because they

had never lived in the west” (F11, 253). Later, she explained how her and her husband worked out their roles, saying that some of it just happened naturally, due to the domestic requirements of their communal living situation (F11, 305). She explained, “so that’s where my role kind of changed. We used to have a full-time cook but she went overseas and so then we had no one to organize it, so that’s basically, I’ve been doing a lot of the practical running of the place” (F11, 321). When asked if this fit her gifting, she laughed and said “the biggest thing about missions, usually it’s whoever is available does the job” (E11, 441). When asked if there were any guidelines for the wives’ roles, she answered, “there were some guidelines, but very loose. This is one of our weaknesses and this is an area we are working on now, basically. Now, being in this position, we’ve been able to see there is a lot of things that are lacking obviously, and one of them is guidelines and what is your job description. We did have to work on a lot of that ourselves as we got into it. I think because each leader has taken on certain areas or at least emphasize certain areas, so perhaps the leadership guidelines are made to suit the leader” (F11, 240-245).

The interviewer suggested, “it’s very flexible it sounds like” and the woman repeated “Flexible. Sometimes for some, maybe, perhaps more direction for what is expected, and I think, I mean it is an area we are working on in all the leadership roles at all levels” (F11, 247-249).

The participant who had emphasized the strongest that she had been included in the proposal and transition, further clarified “the discussion and the journey of moving towards the leadership position was totally, I was included in all of that. The job was then and still is today very much my husband’s role. He was the [regional leader]. He is the [mission leader] of [mission agency]. We are not co-directors” (C08, 91). Later, she explained her role:

It was not signed and sealed right before we got into the jobs nor were we given the jobs by people before we got there. We were allowed to come into the

situation and we have very, very helpful and supportive boards ... and together with them we walked the journey for the first few months of just figuring out what my official title should be. (C08, 124)

Later she re-stated that each case was handled individually: “we don’t have any kind of template that we put over a situation and say, “this is what it’s got to mix out.” We take every (case), as we feel God is calling an individual to leadership, then we walk that journey of what that’s going to look like for that couple and for that family” (C08, 237-241). While this woman does have status and two specific roles, which will be discussed later (under “resolution”) she proudly stated, “I’ve never had a job description given to me” (C08, 99) yet, “I’ve always been part of that (leadership) team with my own portfolio of responsibility” (C08, 103). It is important to note, as this woman emphasized a couple times, “a critical thing for us is we don’t have any children so my missionary career, especially in what I am doing now, is very different from my colleagues” (C08, 28); “all the way along through there has been a very clear understanding that we work together as a team, but I have to say that I think this is because we don’t have children, yes my own situation is probably unique” (C08, 95).

In reference to status and role as it relates to lines of authority, the above woman also explained that in her mission agency “no wife is responsible to her husband, they all have a different boss ... same office, (but) we would never expect the wife to have the same boss. It’s not good for them as a couple and it’s not good for the rest of the staff” (C08, 450-454). She continued with further explanations, “so even I have a boss who is not [husband’s boss]. In the area of my [mission agency position] I am answerable to him and the leadership team for whatever project I’ve been assigned ... and I would have to face the music if I was not doing that right with the whole team” (C08, 458); “I do have a boss ... and so I’m responsible to him for that role and he has responsibilities for me in

terms of my work ethics ... and the rest of the staff know that he's my boss, and so if anybody had an issue and it couldn't be resolved between me and them, they would go to him, not [husband's name]" (C08, 462). She extended this accountability structure:

Even a wife who works from home, for example I gave you the [mission leader's wife], working three or four hours at home doing work for him, she is responsible to him for what she is doing, but her boss for her ethics of work and her, you know, everything to do with who she is, she is responsible to [mission leader position]. He takes responsibility for wives of leaders in the office who work closely with their husbands; we have one wife whose husband is the [mission leader position] and so she works with her husband on [ministry] but she's also a wonderful cook so she does all the catering for our [mission agency] office for events or whatever, but she's responsible to [mission leader position] not her husband. (C08, 472, 480)

A final word from this woman, who had by far the most to say regarding spouse's roles:

One other very important thing, very important for the other staff, perceptions on your staff, we have a lot of missionaries on the staff, but we have a lot of employed staff that we value very highly, and so their understanding that missionary wives don't get to cut corners is very important ... we try to make it that way, but people in the office also have to understand that these women can be away for times. We work when we can. I'm having dinner tonight, that's work, and we could work every weekend, but I'm not in the office some days in the week. I flex. (C08, 484, 488)

When the interviewer summarized, "there is a level of trust between people," she asserted, "yes, absolutely ... we try to work on that ethos" (C08, 490-502).

Longevity

When asked about the prospects for longevity in their current context, the following answers were given. One participant immediately said how much she missed the mission field, exclaiming "every time I go back I want to stay!" (B02, 789-795).

Later, when the question was posed again, this woman said "I think to say we would do this for a long time is a little difficult because he does have [number of] years ... so in my

mind it, like it's, okay, we can do this, I think he has [number] more years ... I try not to focus on it too much, but I think that's the reality" (B02, 829-843).

The participant whose husband thrived on the mission field but who herself could not cope at the time, answered the longevity question by saying:

My husband has more recently begun talking about maybe someday returning to the field ... it's never left his mind and I think he kind of approaches that topic, you know, tentatively, like not with 'gung-ho we are doing it' but it is still, is kind of in his heart, and I think maybe down the road it is a possibility, so I don't think we are entirely tied necessarily to the role here. (D09, 306)

In response to a more direct question, this woman said "we certainly don't feel like pulling out" (D09, 759).

Another participant responded to this question with:

Um, I don't think [husband's name] will take us to retirement, so I'm always living with that sense of, I want to always be willing to move on when the Lord says, "I have something new for you," so you know that might be short and that might still be years down the line. I have no idea, but I don't feel like this is the final thing. It might be, but I doubt it. (B03, 667)

A participant who was thinking about her husband's retirement in the future, volunteered "We even think about going back to the field after we are retired" (A06, 802).

Three women spoke of succession plans. The first woman said:

I mean we are working towards, you know, we are always working ahead, say [number of] years, so we would be looking at situations and thinking [year]. What will happen between the next [number of] years ... that was [husband's name] and my personal philosophy of leadership from day one, and we are looking towards the transition to the next person, and that's how we've always worked, and that's how we are working here. (C08, 394-398)

The second woman offered, "I am thinking, I think he's considering [number of] years, so that's a record" (E10, 672). When asked if that was his choice to make, she answered "yes ... I think he will speak to the board on that, and he has encouraged the board to

think about replacement even now. I think it will probably be in another [number of] years” (E10, 674-680). The third woman explained:

We work it in [number of] year terms, every [number] years you are re-elected into your role ... by the [mission agency], not the board as such, well maybe the board, it’s the missionary field of [country], which are the [nationality] missionaries, not all the missionaries but the ones on our home staff ... we all meet together once a year for what we call [official meeting] and it’s there that yearly decisions are made. (F11, 494-498)

This woman spoke about the fact that they have been in their leadership position for [number of] terms and they agreed to let their names stand for another term. However, the international umbrella of their mission agency has asked them to consider a regional leadership position overseas (F11, 502-506). She told how they have been in dialogue with the mission agency about timing in relation to their children finishing [level of schooling] stating, “they do look at it in long terms and they do allow you the flexibility to talk it through, which is really good ... and before you leave a position you have to find successors” (F11, 532-540).

Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership

Under the heading Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership, the findings were reported in the following categories: issues, children, resolution, attitudes and recommendations to mission agencies.

Issues

A myriad of issues surfaced during the interviews, the majority of which seemed in one way or another to revolve around the issue of travel. All of these participants expressed a desire to travel with their husbands. One woman said, “I wanted to travel. I

wanted to be part of this job. So at least if I could go travelling with him, go where he went and meet the people that he's leading and, you know, I just like to travel. I enjoy that. I enjoy that (emphasis hers)" (A01, 804).

The main issue that seemed to preclude the above core value was the financial necessity for the wife to work. One of the participants said, "I was no longer paid for it (ministry) you know ... so I nursed at night" (A06, 451-455) and later, "the first year I was there, I got a job at [store] because we thought we needed the financial help" (A06, 505). When asked if she felt that was enough to 'float' things for her family, she responded, "in a very modest way you know" (A06, 655-657). After having purchased a home, another woman spoke of her job as being "...a great provision for us" (B05, 127).

When asked about her teaching job, one participant admitted, "the financial part was probably part of it ... it was certainly helpful" (B02, 380-386). This woman later worked in a job she really liked at the mission agency office, but eventually quit:

... the pay was so pathetic ... they gave me great reviews and really wanted me to stay but I basically said either you pay me more or I can get other employment where I can have flexible time and get paid a way more. And that's when I started to do [Job] on the side because it was fast and flexible money ... it has been an amazing profession, thousands of dollars, helped me pay for the kids to stay in Christian schools, college. (B02, 408, 412, 918)

Two other participants also mentioned paying for post-secondary education for children:

"I wanted to help [daughter's name] with her university" (A07, 504-508); "then when our second one went off to college ... I felt like it was probably time I contributed financially to this whole situation and we were really going to need it with two in college" (B03, 536).

A participant who worked in her mission agency and, along with her husband, raised full support to pay for their ‘salaries’, spoke of others in their mission:

... sometimes for financial reasons, if the husband and wife come back to a sending base and for some reason you know the church is saying, “We aren’t going to support you, we don’t support people on a sending off position,” very short sighted, but you know sometimes the woman has to go to work. (C08, 220)

Similarly, another participants explained that for [number of] years she worked two jobs outside the mission agency, “... because we were on a missionary salary” (E10, 474-478).

Some participants specifically said that their outside work prevented them from travelling with their husbands: “no, no, I couldn’t do much (travelling) after that ... I was working full-time ... and I was home alone a lot in those days as he travelled a lot” (A07, 525-533); “it would have been such a great opportunity for me to continue my [second language] and I could be teaching full-time now, but there was always that catch, that I wanted to be available to travel with [husband’s name] and that job didn’t allow that. So that’s been a very high priority for me” (B02, 895). As mentioned above, this woman worked at the mission agency after that, but the busiest time of year conflicted with her husband’s travel and her kids’ spring break, so she quit that and found another flexible job (manual labour) outside the mission agency which enabled her to travel with her husband (B02, 408-412). One participant was overwhelmed by domestic tasks working in the communally-based mission agency, due to a lack of staff, which prevented her from travelling and attending meetings with her husband (F11, 421-433).

Another participant expressed doubt that she would be able to find a flexible enough job: “I wanted to travel, so I couldn’t get a job because you can’t just get a job

and say, “I’m going to be gone for two weeks, Oh, I’m going to be gone for three weeks in July, and I can’t be here this week.” Who is going to hire you? You know, you don’t get a job” (A01, 800). When this issue came up again, she said:

I wanted to travel with [husband’s name], and I needed to be available for those times when he wanted to go to a conference or to a field site to visit ... I valued working with [husband’s name] over working in an impersonal [denominational /church office] somewhere. We didn’t need the money. Like, if we needed the money, I would have worked, I would have made work, and I just would not have been able to travel. (A01, 912-918)

This woman found a job in the service sector using her creative skills, and few others also eventually find jobs that were flexible enough to travel. The woman with the flexible manual labour job said, “I’ve travelled so much and I have a very gracious [work] partner who, there are a whole bunch of us, and we just fill in for each other when we are in town” (B02, 906). Another participant who had stressed the importance in their mission agency of the wife being available to fully support her husband, gave examples:

All of these of wives that I’ve given you an example of, are on jobs that allow them to travel with their husbands ... because she’s involved in [teaching], has vacation times that they plan some of his trips and she would go and she would speak at some of our conferences, so the way, how can I say it, they are part of the team but they are free to pursue for whatever reason other things if it seems appropriate. (C08, 233)

Another issue that related to travel was church ministry, as stated by one woman:

I started by being on the missions committee, and then I’m gone for three weeks exactly when we needed to have this prayer booklet out for a conference or something, and I couldn’t be there. You know, it wouldn’t even allow me to get involved with church. I was asked to be on the women’s ministries committee (but) recognizing that I’d be missing three out of six months and missing three of the meetings, the planning you know, I said to [name] I don’t think this is going to work and she said “yes, I can see. (A01, 826)

Regarding community outreach, another participant said:

I think for me right now the biggest tension is that I feel very torn between going with [husband's name] all the time, and being in my neighbourhood and my home church, where I really want to contribute. I have this passion to be a good [mission agency office] person ... many of us are travelling and, like, we go to church but what do we contribute? So [husband's name] and I have really tried to be intentional and not just take but to give at church and I get very close to people and then I feel badly when (I have to say) "but, sorry, I'm going on another trip ... I feel like I'm in two worlds and I don't know that I handle that as well as some people do. (B02, 758-762)

For some participants the value of travelling with their husband is trumped by the value of having at least one parent home with their children (D09, 656, 777-783; B03, 506-508; A06, 532; B03, 378, 417, 421-431; F11, 279-283). In addition to her children, one woman also added the church ministry aspect, stating, "because of my children and the commitment that I made at church with children's ministries. Actually, another gal and I started our [children's program] from scratch and it took sometimes hours a week" (B03, 512). Regarding this church ministry, she also noted, "I just wasn't paid for it, but it gave me the outlet and I wasn't just sitting around twiddling my thumbs waiting for the kids to get home from school" (B03, 516). One participant who did not have children herself but recognized the issues for these spouses stated:

Moms with children, I would say their level of frustration varies because they are so dedicated to their kids and education, such as training their kids in the way they should go, but you know, they love what they do, but they wish they had more time to be involved with their husbands. So there is a level of frustration which I've never had. That's a life issue. That's not necessarily a mission issue. That's just being involved as a mother. (C08, 446)

When questioned about finding people to care for their children so she could travel with her husband, one woman answered, "I didn't know anybody ... my parents

were still overseas actually” (B03, 431). Another participant said they had left their kids with her parents once when they had been invited to a couples retreat, but she did not seem to feel free to do more of this (D09, 702-708). One mother of young children, whom the researcher interviewed at a conference overseas, was delighted to be able to travel there with her husband: “the beauty of it is that my Mom and Dad live so close by ... yes, yes, it’s been very workable” (B05, 158-166). Another participant recalled when her children were younger:

At that point it was hard to be away from the children for a long time, so there were a lot of arrangements. We would have people come into our home because we wanted to keep it as normal as possible ... we would usually find young couples ... they thought it was cool to play Mom and Dad, exactly, that’s what usually worked out. (B02, 422-430)

As their children grew older, some spouses of mission leaders became more free to travel with their husbands. One woman said that she had only started travelling with her husband in the past year, as she has one child in university but the rest are in highschool and live at home (F11, 279-283). Looking to the future, she stated “I am sure a lot of this will change when I don’t have them and I’ll be travelling a lot with [husband’s name]” (F11, 550). The participant who spoke of visiting all the mission agency’s fields with her husband said that she could do this because, “the kids were older. [daughter’s name] went back to [MK boarding school] for [number of] years, so that enabled me to travel with [husband’s name]” (A07, 467-477). Another participant said that she and her husband had recently become ‘empty nesters’, so she would now be more free to join him in taking on a mission leadership role that would require even more travelling (E10, 686-697).

Another issue related to travel was whether or not the mission agency provided any financial assistance to encourage husbands to take their wives with them. A few participants said that the cost of travel with their husbands was covered by the mission agency (A01, 924-926; A07, 443-447; B05, 168-174; C08, 133; E10, 431, 446). One woman said, “our husbands were all travelling, and at that point they would travel for six or seven weeks at a time. This was [number of] years ago ... we were allowed one [mission agency paid] trip every [number of] years” (B02, 324-328). Since becoming the mission leader, this woman’s husband had increased that (B02, 647). However, she recalled, “the first years I had to pay for myself to go to [mission agency conference] (B02, 366). She also told of another trip that she had gone on, which had not been covered: “After I went out the first time (to the region where they used to be missionaries) they (the missionaries) said, “you need to travel with your husband” so they collected money and paid for my second trip!” (B02, 340). When asked if there were any provisions made so she could attend mission agency conferences, another participant said, “no, it came along later” (B03, 437-439).

One participant who travelled with her husband to mission agency conferences said, “we were allowed to travel with our husbands whenever they felt they needed us to, and they (the mission agency) paid for it” (A06, 524-528). Similarly, another woman said, “there was a general understanding at senior leadership that the [mission leader] will make a wise decision as to whether his wife, and he has a travel budget” (C08, 133). Several other women also specified that when they travelled with their husband it was covered by his budget (B05, 168-174; C08, 133; E10, 431, 446). One of these women

spoke enthusiastically about how “cool and great” it had been to travel with her husband all over the world, to meetings and visiting missionaries, taking along pastors with them. But she was not able to go as much anymore because of restricted funds in the mission agency: “earlier on we had a little more freedom for that, and now it’s a little tighter” (E10, 431-438). This woman now works in a department of the mission agency and is sometimes covered financially by the mission to travel in that capacity (E10, 567-571).

Some wives are able to travel with their husbands using air miles that he has incurred from his travels (A01, 930; B02, 354-356; A06, 552-560; E10, 440-442; F11, 277-279). One woman said it was a combination: “he usually takes me on his air miles and then picks up my food on his budget because he pays for a room anyway ... and if I sleep in the bed with him it’s not going to cost any more. It makes him happier!” (A01, 930-934). Another woman said, “it depends ... often if he is just there on his own at ministry meetings, I will pay for my own food. But if it’s something like [mission agency conference] or [denominational conference] I would just be on his (budget)” (A06, 564).

When questioned whether the mission agency had laid out guidelines for travel and finance, some of the women were unsure and confused: “um, perhaps not as clearly as we hoped it would be, I mean, partly because I suppose the whole, what is expected of you in this type of leadership role isn’t so clear. I think financially, the consensus is not always, that we weren’t sure what that meant” (F11, 291); “now they pay, now I don’t remember if they pay for, I think they just pay transportation now. That’s a detail I’m not positive about” (A07, 336). Another woman seemed to draw a total blank: “I don’t recall that being anything specifically” (D09, 648). When questioned again regarding later

overseas travel she said, “you know there was another question similar to that ... I’m not sure exactly where the funds would come from for that” (D09, 767). When asked about North American travel, she responded “covered, but I don’t exactly know from where ... it wasn’t something that we had to forgo until we had raised the money for it, but where it comes out of, I am really not sure” (D09, 765-771). Perhaps this woman’s uncertainty was due to the fact that, because of having young children, she had never travelled overseas with her husband since he’d become the mission leader, and she had only been to one couples’ conference with him in North America (D09, 702-708).

Other issues that came out strong for these participants related to losses that these women commonly struggle with. As mentioned in an earlier section, status and role were the biggest losses, but there were many other losses for these trailing spouses. The most widely experienced was the loss of ministry together with their husbands, which is an issue that many of these wives grieve over as they look back upon their mission field days, still struggling to come to terms with this great loss (A01, 1082, 1269-1282; A06, 711-713; A07, 549-553; B02, 657-659; B03, 264-278, 417; D09, 656, 777-783; E10, 369, 375; F11, 415).

Another significant loss for some of these women related to their ministry, as their call and most of their ministry experience was as a missionary overseas. The level of their involvement on the field (as reported earlier in the “Mission Field” section under the category “ministry”) compared to their ministry as a spouse of a mission leader in North America (as reported in the “Mission Leadership” section under the category “status and role”) told a rather sad story of loss, both for these participants, the mission agencies they represent, and as a human resource to the mission community and the Great Commission.

For many, the loss of missionary status and any kind of official position or unofficial role in their mission agency, meant the loss of opportunities to minister in their area of spiritual giftedness and experience (A01, 1030-1048, 1144-1164; A06, 576, 778; B03, 268-274; E10, 345, 375, 395, 474). Regarding the lack of meaningful and sufficiently remunerative ministry-related jobs within the mission agency, one participant admitted, “I think most of the wives do things outside the office” (B03, 502-504).

Other participants spoke of taking jobs outside their gifting, in order to be involved. One participant said that initially there was no position available for her in her mission agency, but later a position in a department had come up and she was hired. When asked if that fit her gifts and abilities she retorted, “no, [position] is not my gifting, but I can do it” (E505-509). Another woman found a job in her church and said it was fine, but it really wasn’t a ministry that she loved (A06, 509-516). The participant who was overwhelmed by the domestic duties in her role in the mission agency, when asked if she felt like she was ministering according to her call and gifting, laughed as though the question was entirely irrelevant, saying it was more about “whoever is available to do the job” (F11, 439-441).

Like former missionaries who have left the field for other reasons, another loss for these women is the life of international living, their identity as expatriates and world travellers. One woman recalled that when they first came back people would say, “when are you going back? How long are you doing this? When are you going to the next place?” (D09, 886). Not only are these wives not travelling to live overseas anymore but, as cited above, some are not able to go on the trips that their husbands do, as various issues preclude this kind of travel for them.

There was also the loss of missionary colleagues, referred to by this sub-culture as their “missionary family.” One participant and her husband had worked on their own as missionaries and not on a team, and she mentioned her grieving the loss of the missionary life but suggested, “I don’t think it was as difficult as it was for others on other fields where the missions family, which is actually how I had grown up, the missions family worked a lot together and was close” (B03, 407-409). This was most poignantly explained by the participant who was devastated in the instant when the missionaries were being commissioned at a denominational conference before returning to the field, and she realizes she was no longer a missionary and no longer part of that family (B02, 276-280). Every time she travelled back to the field, she said that she wished she could stay (B02, 791).

This participant also alluded to another loss – the loss of high quality MK schooling for her children, which had been covered by the mission agency on the field:

I think part of it too (the reason for her to get a job) was that our children had been in public school. Our daughter’s experience was fun and I don’t know that she learned anything, but we were supposedly in this wonderful school district, but compared to the standards overseas, we were really disappointed in what our kids were getting in school, academically. (B02, 390)

She and her husband decided to send their children to a private school:

And so because I started teaching in this Christian school, our kids automatically had entrance into the school, so I kind of look back at that and see that God provided that for them because it was just excellent education ... at reduced rates ... and they got in which was huge because there was such a long waiting list. It wasn’t my initial motivation but that’s how God worked it out, it was his provision. (B02, 396-404)

Later this woman explained that she had to work in order to “... pay for the kids to stay in Christian schools, college ... it’s very expensive, we couldn’t have afforded it if I hadn’t

done that” (B02, 918-926). From her children’s perspective, her son expressed a significant loss of his friends at MK school (B02, 851). Another participant mentioned that her daughter’s first reaction to the mission leadership proposal was that she wouldn’t be able to graduate from the MK school (B03, 334). This subject will be reported in more detail from the children’s perspective in the following section on “children.”

Many of these participants were actually more used to living overseas than in their passport country, so there was also the loss of the familiar and the challenges associated with moving back to North America, not necessarily to their previous home base: “we didn’t know [city] from anywhere, so this wasn’t like we were at home ... and we didn’t know anybody” (B03, 364); “... finding a house and setting up, and getting the kids in school ... [my daughter] was in braces ... you know, finding all these things like an orthodontist” (B03, 344, 360) Another related loss was the opportunity to use their foreign language and cultural knowledge (B02, 895).

Yet another significant loss was affordable domestic help, which many of these participants had on the mission field, freeing them up for involvement in ministry (B03, 155-157; A06, 243; B02, 155). One woman said, “we all had helpers and then I was back to doing it all myself” (B03, 574). This woman said she had to come to a point of acceptance of what seemed like doing “less important things” compared to the important ministry she used to do on the mission field (B03, 574). A similar struggle on a larger scale seemed to be occurring in the woman whose role now mostly involved cooking and cleaning in their communal mission compound, doing most of the practical running of the facility (F11, 321). When asked if this fit with her abilities, gifts and interests she

answered, “definitely it does, but I think it’s a bit much” (F11, 325). She continued: “I don’t mind the physical part of the work, but when I’m expected to also know so many details about what is happening on different fields with our missionaries, it’s hard to do both ... so it can be a bit too much, and I think we are understaffed basically” (F11, 332-336); “people always enjoy coming here, but to actually live and just cook all the time, it’s a position that most people don’t want” (F11, 340); I think for [husband’s name], because he’s on so many other committees, which I can be a part of if I want, but I haven’t chosen to be because I’m too busy here” (F11, 415).

Financially, domestic help was no longer an option, and high quality private/Christian schooling was only possible through a second income. But there were other losses related to finance as well. On the mission field, their missionary support base usually covered rent, or their mission agency owned the home they lived in. Some of them were provided by the mission agency with money for appliances and basic furnishings, and were able to also raise tax-deductible funds for cars/maintenance, ministry related expenses, household furnishings, etc. Now they were back in North America, where things are more expensive than on most fields, but are no longer covered by the mission agency or charitable funds. Also, as noted earlier, some of these people purchased a home for the first time in their lives (B02, 290). As one woman said, “we had a month from the time we arrived to the United States until he started the job and that meant finding a house, furnishing a house ... (laughter) when you don’t have anything” (B03, 356-360). For most of them, they used to have everything they needed – they were the ‘haves’ among the ‘have nots’ – but they left most of that overseas and returned to a

society where, due to their husbands' modest salaries and the higher cost of living, they had now become the 'have nots' (A06, 655-657). It is little wonder, then, that one woman equated member care with financial assistance in getting their belongings sent home: "they basically gave us retirement allowance so they allowed us to ship a number of things back, so we felt very cared for" (B05, 63).

Some participants struggled with the loss of their health, after having served in ministry overseas physically and emotionally well for many years. Two of them, who had also reported the severest difficulties in the transition, developed health issues after the first year. The first woman said, "I didn't take care of myself that year," as she was caring for everyone else, getting them settled in (B02, 298-302). She explained, "it was such a conflict of emotions and interests and I ended up at the end of the [season] with major physical difficulties" (B02, 617). The interviewer asked if she felt this was stress related and the woman replied, "oh, there's no question, they ran a whole battery of tests. They thought I had [disease], all kinds of things, and it turned out to be stress. I was having numbness in my limbs, and it wasn't that I felt unhappy, it was just such a conflict" (B02, 617-621).

The second woman, who had been active on the mission field but was prevented from working in her mission agency due to policy, struggled greatly the first year then settled into complacency (which seemed almost like despondency) lamenting, "my health has a lot to do with it (lack of involvement) because I don't sleep and therefore I am tired and when you are tired all the time, you have no energy, no motivation" (A01, 976).

Another participant, after resigning from a job she loved at the mission agency when the new restrictive policy was coming in, then being hired back for an interim

position to help her husband, had an unfortunate event shortly thereafter, which landed her in the hospital severely ill and left her with debilitating side effects:

I became sick. I really haven't been able to work ... I'm in so much pain most of the time. I had intended to find a job, I wanted to find a job, but I haven't been able to. (A06, 725-742)

This woman was anticipating surgery to try and improve her situation. When asked if she was frustrated by her inability to be involved anymore, she offered sadly “yes, I think about it every morning” (A06, 762).

Children

None of these women mentioned their children being considered by the mission agency during the proposal or transition into mission leadership. One participant explained the process of leaving the field: “... packing our stuff and getting the kids prepared, as it was a huge shock for them ... for them it was their life turned upside down” (B03, 318). She said of her youngest child, a preschooler, “... he didn't care, but the older ones they felt very connected with the [national] church family, the academy as their school. Our daughter's first question, as she was just getting ready to go into [elementary] grade, first thing she said was, I won't graduate from the academy?” (B03, 334). Later this woman elaborated again about the transition:

... the initial, especially our [middle child], the transition was the hardest for him and it took him a good year or more to feel like he could actually live here in [country] ... so it was hard watching him go through that. He was going into [elementary] grade, so at [age] ... he's more introverted, our daughter who is exactly like me, she's older and she was going into [elementary] grade ... it took [my son] a little longer but once probably after the first year, he was well established and felt comfortable. (B03, 671-685)

Another participant reported, “our oldest, when we came back, he was almost [teenager] and we had basically moved every two years for the last [number of] years before we moved again, and he would say, “Mom and Dad, are we going to stay in [city], stay somewhere for longer than two years?” (B05, 235).

When asked if it was a difficult transition coming home from the mission field, another woman said, “it was probably harder than we realized ... especially for our daughter who went right into high school as a [year]. She just felt out of it, and I wish we’d had the “Third Culture Kids” stuff at that time. There’s a lot of seminars and written stuff” (E10, 723-729). The interviewer said, “so, you didn’t have member care people at that time who could direct you to those resources?” to which she answered, “we have one gal who the kids knew but she was working with all the MKs, so she couldn’t give a lot of individual time or attention, but I would say no, we didn’t have any substantial ... we try to keep track of our MKs but it could be done more thoroughly” (E10, 731-733).

Another participant said:

It was very difficult for our son when we first came back. He was in [middle school] grade, which is a hard time anyway. That was the hardest year of my life, my parents moved then, so I really felt for him. He would cry at night and say, “my friendships aren’t the same ... these friendships are just a percentage of what I had in [country],” because the kids are so close at MK school (B02, 851).

She added, “you can’t replicate that ... you just can’t, even if you have a sleep over every single weekend with all your friends, it’s not the same” (B02, 855). Continuing to speak about her son, she recalled:

He went through a lot of hard days and would say, “couldn’t Daddy get fired from his job so we could go back?” I said, “if he gets fired, we probably aren’t going back,” but he adjusted ... and those were hard times for me because you feel like you are punishing your children for God’s call on your life, and he so wanted to be in [country] with his friends. (B02, 859)

The participant from the communal living mission agency said that she was more concerned about her children in the transition than she was about her own role, saying:

They had always been a month or two at home in [country] or [country], so they (had) never studied or been in school in the west, (had) always been in [national] schools so it was a big transition for them, and I had [number of children] in high school and [number] nearing high school and [number] in junior high, so they weren’t that little anymore, so that I guess was my biggest concern. (F11, 253)

When this woman was asked how her children fared in the transition, she responded:

They’ve done very well. The first year was a little tough on a couple of them because (of) their age and I know enough to know that especially middle school age, it’s a very hard time to go to the school in grade six or seven, it’s tough years but they did pretty good and actually, like today, if you ask them today, they love living here and having a community. (F11, 346-348)

The interviewer commented, “so they are influenced by a lot of people they meet through there as well,” and the woman confirmed, “right, and we allow young people through, people who are really on fire and, you know, just have a lot of vision, and it’s just a really great place for young people to grow up in” (F11, 350-352). When asked if her children would say that they felt connected to what their parents are doing, this woman said:

They definitely know what we are doing, I think they understand what we are doing and they connect ... they certainly do when the candidates are here in training. They understand what they are doing here and that they are learning to be a missionary, and I think they have developed really close links and close relationships with a lot of the candidates. (F11, 631-637)

The interviewer asked whether any MKs visit their compound, and this woman said her children have built relationships with the ones who come through on furloughs (F11, 639-

641). She did admit that the communal living situation at times puts pressure on her kids, but stated:

One thing is I do spend as much time as I can with them, and together as a family we do a lot of things together, often when we have a day off, and I think that that helps, and our kids are very outgoing kids because they've lived communally all their lives, so in a sense it hasn't been all that difficult for them but, yeah, it does (put pressure on them) when they are teenagers. (F11, 601-603)

She also emphasized that even though her husband travels so much, he tries to get to a lot of their athletic games and be a part of that, which she says her kids are very appreciative of (F11, 660-662).

In regard to struggles with the mission agency, one participant stated:

We've been careful not to let our children have a negative attitude or poison them in any way. I'm sure it comes out from time to time but you know, we are human and sometimes we have human thoughts that come out ... but that has been one of our values, not to poison our children. It hurts them. (A07, 864-868)

The interviewer prodded, "even when things are difficult?" and this woman said, "they could pick it up and I don't want them to do that" (A07, 870-872). Conversely, the participant who had a difficult transition after the first year and health issues which followed, mentioned that her kids saw she was going through a hard time and that their mom was not a 'happy camper'. She said that she hadn't hidden anything from them, feeling that openness was the best way to work through the transition for all of them as a family (B02, 881-887).

As noted earlier, the ethos of the mission agency either engendered an atmosphere that included or excluded children. One woman pointed out that in her mission agency there is no one in senior leadership with little kids, implying that children were not even

in the mix (E10, 705), whereas another woman explained in detail how their mission agency has transitioned to younger leadership and because of that they have made it a priority to create a family compatible atmosphere (C08, 167, 171, 175). She also said:

We encourage couples to travel together ... and at the international level we have ... [number] of our most senior men in leadership have children who are either in school or home schooling, and we work very closely on this to try to find ways when it is appropriate and possible for the wife to travel with her husband ... and sometimes they take their children, sometimes others look after their children ... sometimes they will go along, and that is what we encourage. (C08, 145-159)

Other participants said that they were intentional in their efforts to keep their children connected to their ministry at the mission agency. One woman offered, “we talk a lot about it” (B03, 689), and concluded:

So I think as much as possible they have felt part of what we do and they really do feel an affinity or a familiness with ... they called the people from [mission department] “Aunt” and “Uncle” just like we did on the field ... they grew up, especially the [number of] older ones, with a continuation of that sense of other mission family that they carried over from the [country]. (B03, 693)

She said of her youngest child, “his experience is a little bit different because his most recent recollection of ministry is the (North American) church ministry side, I don’t think he feels as connected” (B03, 705). When asked if she felt like her children are connected to what her husband does, another participant answered “yeah, I do, in the sense that they pray through the prayer time, (and) they go to the annual family conference” (D09, 824-830).

As already reported, several participants mentioned that their husbands travelled a lot and had to be away from the family. One woman said, “he did a lot of travelling too, so starting when the kids were pretty young, he was gone” (B03, 421). Another participant explained how some people view this:

Some people look at it, when he goes off for [number of] weeks they say, “how do you do that?” and I really feel like that the Lord just really kind of undergirds us because it works out fine, and the kids are very resilient. However, the longer trips are harder, and I think more lately [husband’s name] has been saying, “I really think that we need to try and shorten the trips, maybe it’ll take more trips, and not try to do so much in one,” just to have a bit more normalcy, so we are leaning towards that because it does get very long. (D09, 783-784)

Although this woman admitted that frequent travel was one of the challenges for the family of the [mission leader title], she also said “but we improved that in a sense, that [husband’s name] will call as often as he can and talk to the kids almost every day, and send them a postcard, stuff like that” (D09, 842).

When asked if there was any opportunity to include the children in anything they, as adults, do with the mission agency one woman offered, “a week or two ago we took the [number of] younger ones with us when we went to [place] and so we took them with us, (but) they are just too young to understand a whole lot” (B05, 265-267). She added, “And we have [missionaries] into our home, and the kids are there” (B05, 271). Another woman said in response to a question about their family travelling together, “when he gets to go to [state], which is one of our (mission) fields, he gets to take one of the [children] with him. They fly to the different remote villages. I think at different points he hopes to take the kids with him, but for all of us to go is such an expense, and we don’t have it” (D09, 847). The interviewer suggested that he could probably use air miles to take one of them and this woman drew a blank, but added “I hope it works out because it would be a special bonding thing and a great experience” (D09, 850-851).

Another woman also expressed desire for her children to travel with their father, but said that although they had been on a family trip to [country] a few years ago, the

children had never been on any mission-related trips with their father: “we talked about it, but because of finances it’s just not possible” (F11613). When asked if her husband had air miles she responded, “oh, he does, but he uses them. He goes across [the country] [number of] times a year, and probably with his air miles ... I remember we talked about it, and in the future he might, and he might have a trip to [country] and my son wants to go with him, so I’m not sure ... it might happen” (F11, 617-629).

One woman reported, “[husband’s name] took our youngest to the area conference a year ago or two years ago. It was a great opportunity. If there is an opportunity, we would have done it, but they are busy in school and stuff” (E10, 713). The woman who said her mission agency was very family-centred reiterated, “home schooling is a big thing (in our mission agency) and sometimes they take their children. Sometimes others look after their children ... sometimes they will go along, and that is what we encourage” (C08, 155-159). The participant in the communal-living situation mentioned home education as well, in the context of wives’ roles on the mission team:

If you want to be a homeschooling mom, say, you need to work that out with your team ... and make sure that you know it fits in with what that team is doing, because if other moms are carrying a different type of responsibilities but would love to be home schooling moms, you know, you have to equal things out. So, that’s how we kind of work through, and we are big on fellowship and teamwork, and talking things over with, we feel it is the most effective way to stay long term on fields (including their North American ‘fields’) by being supportive of one another. (F11, 701)

Resolution

This category referred to how these women found (or did not find) satisfactory resolution in their new reality. When her husband was asked to take on the leadership role, one participant recalled, “we talked it over, it was a joint decision that he would take

it, and I felt that he was gifted for that, so I thought it was the right move” (A06, 463).

But after they moved to the mission agency headquarters, things did not initially turn out the way she had anticipated, especially at the church they were attending, where she was not able to minister as she had assumed she would (A06, 467-475). She worked at a store to help them out financially (A06, 505) and eventually got a job in their church office but, as already reported, it wasn’t really her ‘thing’ (A06, 509-516). She later started working at the mission agency in a job she really liked and which really suited her gifts and abilities, but when she sensed the new restrictive policy coming in she handed in her resignation (A06, 691). She did work another short stint, as they made an exception to policy when her husband’s assistant was moved to another department and they couldn’t find a replacement (A06, 713-721). But it was during that time that she fell chronically ill and became unable to work (A06, 721-752). As such, while she had experienced a level of resolution along the way – especially when she had the job she so fondly spoke about in the mission agency for several years – overall it had been a bittersweet journey, and in the end she was left hoping for a better resolution in the next chapter of her and her husband’s life, which would be retirement (A06, 790).

Another participant, who appeared to have had the least satisfactory resolution of all of the participants, was from a mission agency with the most restrictive type of policy preventing spouses from working at the headquarters. This woman was also of pre-retirement age and had settled into a life of outside hobbies and occasional travels with her husband, which for her was only a partial resolution: “I think I could have done more, probably should have, but I just got relaxed and comfortable, and was happy in my own

little space of my own home with my garden and, you know” (A01, 1128). In addition to travelling with her husband, this woman also volunteered at the mission agency office, doing the monthly mail-outs with a group of people from her church, saying that:

It’s a good feeling to know you are volunteering your services for something that would cost the agency a lot of money ... so you are contributing to that, and in the meantime you are having fun with the people you are working with, and they provide lunch ... and once a year they’d give us an appreciation dinner. (A01, 873-884)

She added, “I think I probably volunteered initially because I thought maybe this would help me to feel more a part of [the mission department], but it hasn’t worked out that way, which is okay, it’s fine” (A01, 892). When this woman was asked if she felt she was using her gifts for ministry, surprisingly (after all she had expressed in regard to her dissatisfaction) she answered in the affirmative, “yes, at this point in my life I feel that I am. I am encouraging others. I’ve got a small ministry of encouragement to other women, my neighbour included” (A01, 1084-1086). The interviewer prodded, “you don’t feel deprived of ministry opportunities?” and her answer was:

No, no, no, and I have developed a mentorship relationship with my unmarried daughter in [country], and I feel very fulfilled in that, as well as with my married daughters – we talk about mothering, parenting, and I base that on all my experiences. If they ask questions I am encouraging them, they are young moms, and I feel good about that. (A01, 1088-1090)

When the interviewer summarized, “so you’ve found other ways to feel...” she continued:

Yeah, I’ve encouraged a personal pastor friend of mine, and I have gone back into something that I have put on a shelf for a long time, and that is my [hobby] ... I feel good about that for myself, and that’s blessing me ... (because) I’m using a talent that God has given me. (A01, 1092-1102)

The interviewer commended her for finding other outlets but this woman shrugged off the

compliment, “yeah, but none of them are earthshaking” (A01, 1104-1106). When asked if she had been younger and in the same restrictive ministry situation, could she have lived with it for another 10-15 years, she was quick to answer “probably not, I think I had more energy then ... I think I would probably have made more waves!” (A01, 1108-1110). The researcher sensed from her non-verbal gestures that she wanted to add “like you are!”

Another participant from the mission agency that brought in the restrictive policy had actually served alongside her husband prior to that time. She spoke very fondly of having travelled to all of the mission fields in the first two years (A07, 486-488), and also of working at the mission agency office, which the denominational president at that time had suggested for her to do (B02, 492). She said the job in the office had fit her gifts in many ways (A07, 508-516), and that she had been happy working in the office right next door to her husband, so at least she saw him pass by her desk every once in a while, concluding, “so it kept us together” (A07, 516-521). She also found great resolution in other roles, due to the inclusive atmosphere in the mission agency, which she said at that time under a different denominational leader had been really good (A07, 578-579). Her husband had the freedom to fully utilize her as a human resource, and there seemed to be no lack of ministries for her, including teaching seminars which she seemed to find especially satisfying (A07, 545). She suggested, “[husband’s name] I think invited me to do a lot more than I actually felt equipped to do. He needed me and wanted me to do it, and he thought that’s where God was calling me to do it, but maybe I wasn’t just quite as passionate about it as he wanted” (A07, 620-631). When asked later if their time in mission agency leadership had been fulfilling for her, she exclaimed, “oh absolutely it

was” (A07, 829-831). Having left the headquarters for another ministry, this woman explained (as already reported under “ethos of the mission agency”) how the philosophy of leadership and ministry had changed when a new denominational leader came in, and thus became incompatible with her and her husband’s (A07, 741, 745, 751). As she said, “I would have felt very badly if we had continued. I knew it was not right for us to continue. You can’t work with a philosophy that is not yours. You have to believe it with all your heart” (A07, 835). Although this woman had experienced wonderful resolution in the days before this leadership change, in the new atmosphere, resolution would mean a move to another missions ministry with her husband, to which God called them in an amazing series of events and in which they are very fulfilled (A07, 815-823, 839-840).

The participant who still appeared to be processing her inability to cope on the mission field, seemed also to be working out a satisfactory resolution in her present situation as the young wife and mother of a mission leader. In her season of life, she admitted that she feels more comfortable in a support role (D09, 820-822) and explained the resolution that she has come to thus far:

There is an outlet in the church, in that we have a small group meeting in our home now, I attend the ladies Bible study mid-week, and we are providing leadership to the one in our home ... as far as the mission goes, prayer definitely, but secondly, I would say to be somebody for [my husband] to come home to, to help share the weight, to talk to, to pray with, to pray for him ... and I really do feel like I am a partner with him. (D09, 792)

She also mentioned that an important part of her feeling fulfilled in this support role is that her husband values her and has expressed how important this support is to him: “so it

kind of underscores it for me that, yes, it is a very important role to play” (D09, 800). Having young children, this woman is still fairly tied down and this couple is working through the logistics of having shorter, more frequent trips instead of such long separations (D09, 783-784). She expressed that as her children get older and more opportunities come up to travel and minister together with her husband, she will embrace that (D09, 813). There seemed to be an open invitation in her mission agency for when (and if) she wants to move into a more active role of travelling with her husband or working in the mission headquarters in the future (D09, 761-763). In regard to the transition which still seems to be in process, this woman said:

I think there are still problems where I feel like I’m alone, and part of that is just my station in life. I haven’t been able to, you know, take the ladies in the office out for lunch and get to know them and try to have some relationship with the office staff yet. I wish I could, let’s put it that way ... and so in a sense I guess I feel like I am entirely always on the outside and so a change might be so good. (D09, 751-755)

Hopefully in the years to come this couple can make some of these changes in order for her to feel more connected to her husband’s ministry and get a better sense of her own role, in order to experience full resolution.

Another participant found a satisfactory level of resolution in her role through a variety of meaningful involvements connected with the mission agency. She enjoyed encouraging others during her travels with her husband, recalling “people were always so grateful that I had come, and some places I would do speaking to the women, but most of it was being there and praying with people, praying with women, being a support to [husband’s name] and listening ... it was very worth my time” (B02, 416). When she is

home and other mission leaders' wives are on their own she added, "I really have tried to reach out and just call when their husbands are gone and take them to lunch, invite them over and have a movie night (B02, 980). The husband of this woman, since he became the senior leader in the mission agency, has also really tried to include the wives by inviting them to more mission-related meetings and dinners, as she said, "sometimes it would just be at the dinner time, but at least there was a connection and we need that first hand connection, inspiration, so that we feel part of what's going on" (B02, 434). At the same time, she admitted:

Obviously we can't sit in the office and hear everything they say every day, but [husband's name] has been very intentional to send me a lot of memos, anything he thinks that I would be interested in. I probably have ten emails every day ... he likes to let me know what's happening even if it's about someone at the office that's leaving or coming or, you know, anything like that, and whenever there's a farewell he's very good to invite me ... if there's to be a really interesting chapel, "why don't you come to this," or you know, when he's speaking sometimes I'll go. (B02, 442-453)

This woman had worked on and off at the mission agency office and although she found the remuneration unsatisfactory (B02, 408), she was anticipating a new seasonal job there in the near future, which she was really looking forward as she felt it was a perfect fit for her (B02, 926). She had come to realize that she is more project-oriented, so when these opportunities come up in the future this woman will likely avail herself of them. She will continue to seek resolution in the balancing of travels with her husband, involvement in her community and church, outside work and/or seasonal work in the mission agency office (B02, 942). However, women like her who seem to want it all must guard against expecting too much of themselves in every sphere or, as she discovered, they can burn themselves out and end up with physical illness.

The participant who had referred back to the proposal as pertaining only to her husband and thereby necessitated that she find another career (E10, 337, 345), worked two outside jobs at first (E10, 474), then was surprised and delighted when the policy in her mission agency which prevented spouses from working there changed and a job came up that she was hired for, even though she admitted it was not really her gifting (E10, 502-505). As it turned out, the job was changed in such a way that it became a great fit for her, also providing flexible hours to enable her to travel with her husband (E10, 517-537, 625-637). For this woman a clearly defined role in the mission agency office had helped her reach a good resolution: “I think it was as smooth as it probably could be” (E10, 815-817).

Another participant had found that one avenue for resolution was opening her home to mission-related guests: “so again that was one way I really felt connected. Anybody that stayed with us I felt, well, I know those people ... then (later) I knew who [husband’s name] was talking about and who was doing what” (B03, 469, 485). She also mentioned that she had volunteered at the office and that sometimes she was remunerated for it (B03, 496-500). Further resolution for this woman came when she started working at the mission agency office on a more permanent basis (B03, 524-528), then eventually got hired in a department where she works in a part-time job that fits her personality and gifts, and in which she feels very fulfilled, saying that she likes it so much that she could probably work there until retirement (B03, 548, 636-644, 659, 667). The only downside to this job, according to her, is that she now works separately from her husband. To make up for that, outside the mission agency, this woman and her husband minister together by

co-teaching [age group] at their church, which she says, "... is fun, because we haven't done too much together in the church (in North America)" (B03, 590-598). It seemed she was comparing this with their church planting days on the field, which they had enjoyed – teaching together in their church likely helps them to recapture some of that. In any case, for this woman the combination of a clearly defined part-time job in the mission agency, combined with occasional hospitality and teaching ministry together with her husband, seemed to be the right combination for a good resolution.

Another participant also spoke enthusiastically about her part-time job in the mission agency: "this kind of role being off sight was good because a lot of our work is done through the internet, and that could be through the home, and I could manage that with my kids. It was just so ideal" (B05, 111). At less than part-time hours (B05, 101), she feels this role is flexible enough for her season of life (B05, 213-217), and also fits her spiritual gifts and abilities (B05, 129-131). As reported earlier under "status and role," she has great satisfaction and fulfilment in it, saying it is fun and that she loves it (B05, 135-154). This woman positively shone throughout the entire time she talked about her clearly defined role, which indicated to the interviewer that she had found a very satisfactory resolution. She concluded:

I think it will only grow, I think it will be fulfilled more even, as we go on because the first couple of years we were just learning the basics, but as we are learning to work together and we're learning, even though we've worked together as missionaries together, we are working more closely together in some ways now. (B05, 244-245)

For the participant who had retained full missionary status and, at least theoretically, the freedom along with her husband to divide up the leadership role (F11,

224-232, 257), initially in the interview it seemed she was very satisfied and had full resolution. However, as the interview progressed and she opened up more, it gradually came to light that she was, in fact, overworked and overwhelmed by her role, which was almost exclusively limited to cooking for the communal group, cleaning a very large home, and hosting numerous long-term guests (F11, 303-309, 321). While this woman had the gift of hospitality and said that this role fit her abilities, gifts and interests, “definitely it does...,” she added, “...but it’s a bit much” (F11, 323-325). She admitted:

In the practical things, yes, I can organize dinners and carry them through and have no fits about it. I can do all types of catering, fine. Office work, I’m not an office person, and that was one thing I was kind of hoping to work on while I was here, and to brush up on my computer skills and all that sort of stuff, but I haven’t been able to because of all the other practical things, and so it’s just been necessity, you know, what I do now. (F11, 441)

It seemed that the novelty had worn off this woman’s present ministry and, more likely, that she had just become physically and emotionally exhausted from it. In addition to her ministry of hospitality, this woman mentioned that she particularly likes doing debriefing sessions along with her husband for their missionaries, as she enjoys providing member care – she and her husband are actually interested in doing further studies in this area (F11, 441-445). She is now looking toward the future, to when her children will be on their own and she and her husband plan to finish their term in their present ministry and move to [country] to become regional mission leaders in the international umbrella of their mission agency, which will mean travelling around to the fields together (F11, 506-518). This seemed to appeal more to her, and hopefully together with her husband she will find more resolution and fulfilment in this future ministry.

The participant who, in expressing her enthusiasm for her status and role, had all but jumped through the telephone during the interview, indicated nothing less than 100% satisfactory resolution throughout. She had a highly defined role, asserting, “I’ve been allowed to work together with [husband’s name] and the leadership team, and the [regional] team ... and at the international level” (C08, 99). She indicated that she had always been part of that team, with her own portfolio and responsibility, and that this was absolutely acceptable to the rest of the team (C08, 101-105). She also stated:

There was good clarity and acceptance of me and my gifting, and that I also had leadership ... there was always a clear understanding that I should have a job, I should have a job title, I should have a job description, I mean, I had my own budget, and it was all in partnership with [husband’s name] ... (and) I’ve always had my own office. (C08, 124-128)

This woman said that she and her husband had worked happily together in partnership in ministry for many years in their mission agency (C08, 255-257). Her husband had also written this in an email, and he wanted to be in on the interview too, but the researcher did not permit this for any of the couples. This woman also indicated that she was ministering in accordance with her calling and gifts (C08, 259-261), and spoke at length about her two titles and highly defined ministry roles (C08, 262), exuding, “I love my job and I love what I do, and I wouldn’t change it for anything” (C08, 416-420). Although this woman stated, as reported earlier, that she had no children so perhaps her situation was unique (C08, 95), she had also given examples of mothers in her mission agency who also have well-defined roles (even home schooling moms who work in official roles from home). This mission agency ethos and atmosphere seemed most conducive to the involvement of spouses of mission leaders (C08, 347-351), and also

most conscientiously considered and included their children (C08, 145-175). An important part of this woman's resolution was the flexibility she enjoyed (C08, 484, 488), and the trust granted from the mission agency to couples like her and her husband, enabling them to minister freely together in mission leadership, both abroad and in North America (C08, 490-502).

Attitudes

In many of the citations throughout this chapter, participants' words have betrayed their attitudes. The woman who was particularly dissatisfied with her situation of not being able to work in the mission agency office, recalled of her earlier ministry, "I always found something to do, and it was always satisfying ... you know, all the way through, except for here" (A01, 682-688). She hadn't spoken up about her feelings in the mission agency, as she recalled "the intensity was a gradual thing, it didn't all of a sudden happen, like, I didn't wake up one morning realizing, "oh, what am I doing here? What am I supposed to do with my life now?" It didn't come overnight. It was just a gradual discontent with the lack of involvement" (A01, 816). She said that her attitude was, "you know, I'll live with it. I'll just live with, and provide a safe home environment for my husband, and I'll do what I can" (A01, 826); "and the decision I made was, "okay, I'm here, [husband's name] got this job. He's doing a good job of it, I don't want to stifle him, I will just suck it up ... and just be there and be his wife" (A01, 830, 834). When asked if she would have gotten more involved if she had been given the opportunity, this woman sighed, "probably not to a great degree, because, like, as I said, I've gotten, I

won't say lazy, just comfortable, relaxed" (A01, 962-964). In regard to not speaking up or challenging the restrictive policy she said, "my health has a lot to do with it because I don't sleep and therefore I am tired and when you are tired all the time, you have no energy, no motivation" (A01, 976). The interviewer asked her about how her husband felt about all of it, and she responded, "he has felt bad for me that I haven't had much more involvement, but then I can't blame anybody but myself, because I think I've just become complacent" (A01, 1056). She concluded that, "I'm coming to the end of an active ministry career with my husband up until now, and I guess I'm feeling this is the end. I'm just going to wait now until we retire and we'll get, we'll just be involved together, whatever" (A01, 984). Likewise, another participant who had ended up with a feeling of dissatisfaction from no longer being able to work in the mission headquarters, and who was also experiencing health issues, expressed similar concluding sentiments: "We are both hoping we'll find a meaningful ministry when he retires" (A06, 790).

For those who would not soon be retiring, when questioned about their attitude toward being the spouse of a mission leader, one responded:

I was okay with it, but I think part of that, I remember going back to that surrender when I was in college about wherever I call you and realizing that I actually settled this back then, so I don't really need to relive it or rehash it. I just need to be willing at this point to say, okay, you've changed my setting again, and I 'will' again, so I don't remember it as a great struggle. (B03, 435)

As reflected earlier, this woman did have to work through her inner attitude toward domestic duties:

I had grown up with a [professional] mom, and she was 100% [workplace/ministry overseas], so we had somebody who cooked and somebody who cleaned and did laundry, and I didn't know that my attitude towards all those things was

really, “that’s lesser and then there’s more important things to do” ... but it had always been the servant’s role and the other people did the important things. Then in [country] you know, we had all that again ... then I was back to doing it all myself ... but for me (it) became a spiritual submission issue, that you know that this is the season, that the Lord likes what you are doing, so do it well, with an attitude of gratefulness, not of chafing ... but I don’t feel fulfilled doing the ironing like I do doing ministry! (B03, 566-584)

Regarding her level of satisfaction in her role, another participant turned the focus away from herself to elaborate on the story of the woman who had been “devastated” by suddenly having no ministry when she returned from the field for her husband to take a mission leadership position. Not able to work at the mission agency due to a restrictive policy in place at that time, this woman went back to a previous secular profession. As the participant concluded, “but you know, but I’ve sensed, and I’ve never talked to her about it, I sensed an undercurrent of resentment, you know, and possibly unresolved issues” (E10, 375-391). By this participant’s own abrupt responses during the interview when recalling the early days of her own transition when there seemed to be no opportunity for a further role in her mission agency, it seemed that if the policy had not changed and she had not eventually found a satisfactory resolution in the well-defined job she now enjoys in the mission office, she may have also struggled with resentment, like the woman she spoke about (E10, 337, 345, 347-349, 502). It seemed easier for her to talk about someone else’s negative attitudes than it was to reveal her own.

Another participant may have been struggling with a bit of resentment as well – not for reasons of exclusion, but on account of being overloaded with domestic tasks in their communal-living leadership situation: “I struggle more with some of the moms here saying, “I need to really have a day off” (F11, 670). Perhaps these feelings were also

behind the evasiveness in her response to the question about her level of satisfaction:

“others of our leaders have felt, not necessarily, I think we felt fulfilled, maybe we haven’t felt fulfilled, I don’t know” (F11, 437). Regarding her capacity to continue in her role, she was ambivalent:

Yes, I think so. Yeah, yeah, I think sometimes, yeah, I don’t know. I don’t always feel adequate for the job. I think one big thing is just not having that training - I kind of knew what the position meant and what was expected, but I didn’t really understand it. Now, a lot of that has to do with personality, and just being confident in yourself, doing something new. (F11, 550)

A participant who had struggled through the transition but had now reached a good level of satisfactory resolution, spoke at length about the process of readjusting her inner heart attitude:

I feel that this is where God wants us now, and I think that I have learned the secret choices are really important every day, and I make a lot of secret choices to be content because, yeah, I would love to have [husband’s name] around all the time and have a normal life, but you know I go back to my commitment to do whatever God wanted me to do, and it was not about me – it was all about Him, and that’s very humbling when I realize I’m getting off track and wanting something else sometimes. For me it’s been a selfish thing and I’ve had to say, and well, repent and say, “this is about You (God). (B02, 795)

When asked whether she grew into the role or just came to accept it, she said:

I think it was both ... I think there was growth and I think that for me, I have to do a lot of intentional embracing of some of the hard things. Right now it is the change... and God has said this is not your final destination. This is the journey and this is part of life, and I am not one to ever be asked to be stretched so God keeps pursuing me through stretching me, and just so many different things ... through my walk with Him, and that’s where I am right now, and that sounds like I am really whining about the changes, but we’ve been here [number of] years and I just like things to be settled and calm and everyone to be happy, and it’s never going to be that way ... So, okay, I have to accept this. It’s never going to really settle down. (B02, 804-813)

This woman concluded, “at this particular time I think I have change fatigue, with

everyone else changing, and because of my personality I want to nurture everyone that moves into the [mission agency headquarters] whether or not they are in our division, because it's a hard transition" (B02, 770). There was one other aspect that this woman mentioned, which required her attitudinal change:

I think that I have realized that [husband's name] has needed more of me, and I have had less of him ... and that's the world I live in, and it's a privilege. It's a privilege, and I don't want to send him off on these trips without being joyful ... It's a big responsibility to be a woman. It's not fair sometimes. Why is it up to us to keep everyone happy? ... We are the ones with the influence ... I feel like I have an incredible influence, as women we do, and we choose what that influence is going to be: Is it going to be godly influence, or is it going to be ungodly influence? And I feel that I have influence around the world through my husband, so I want to be the wife I need to be. (B02, 787, 1022-1042)

Advice to Mission Agencies

The interviewer asked the participants what things prevented or limited them from fulfilment as a spouse of a mission leader, one of whose responses came out as preventative advice for mission agencies:

I think probably one of the hardest things was that we had no real closure to the [continent] region. There was nothing that ended our time, and for me it is very important to say proper goodbyes and to grieve, and I think through leaving [continent] I learned how important that was, but we came back from [denominational conference] and [husband's name] moved his office down the next day and there was no, there was just nothing that was a formal thing. I mean, there were people that prayed for us and laid hands on us at a couple of different meetings, but I think that (closure) would have been really helpful. (B02, 601)

When asked for advice, a few participants specifically expressed how enthused they were about the study at hand. One woman stated:

God's been very gracious to be patient with me, and I certainly have hard times, and that's why I'm so excited about this (study) because I feel like there's been a lot that could have been avoided, a lot of the pain could have been avoided, if

somebody had just been intentional to tell me some things: “there’s going to be some grieving, there’s loss whenever there is change” ... to be prepared for that, and for me it would have been wonderful if someone had said, “don’t say ‘yes’ to every opportunity that comes around the road. The most important thing is to take care of yourself. (B02, 950)

When asked if she thought she could have benefited from more intentional member care and coaching, she said that she would have loved intentional coaching from the organization (B02, 952-958). She ended by saying, “I’m really excited and I hope that it (this study) will make a difference in the organization, not that people haven’t cared, (they) just need to think ... how to be intentional about nurturing the spouses too ... it’s very different, it’s different than anything” (B02, 1010, 1014, 1018).

Referring to the policy restricting spouses from working at the mission headquarters, one woman said what was hardest for her, “was the lack of empathy from the organization that this is taking place, a lack of concern” (A01, 853). She exclaimed, “I don’t know if I had ever just had the nerve to go up to [denominational leader] in a funny way or joking way (and say), “You know this sucks, [name], that you don’t allow the wives to work.” I didn’t ever have the nerve, I never did that. I just sucked it up. I sometimes wish I would have just said, “[name] this is the pits you know, I mean why can’t I work here?!” (A01, 857). This woman added more later: “If they were aware of it and it was serious enough, I think they would do something about it, I really think so, because it’s an organization that cares for its people” (A01, 1258); “I don’t know if the organization could have done anything to help me, other than give me a job” (A01, 1290); “I don’t want to put any blame on the organization at all. I really think they are unaware” (A01, 1299). When asked specifically for advice, this participant repeated again, “in a

perfect world, I would have wanted to work at the office ... probably (in) [specific department]” (A01, 1144-1148). She qualified this in light of her past experience, listing off all the things she had accomplished in another similar position, summarizing it as:

All that stuff, logistics, that’s what I’m good at ... if I had had a chance to work, say, in [specific department], (if) they would have needed, say even part time even, I would have felt complete, like I felt in [city] – satisfied, involved, partnering, even though we weren’t in the same department. That would have been fine for me. I would have enjoyed that. (A01, 1152-1164)

Regarding others in a similar position to herself in the mission agency, this woman concluded, “I still think that they could do better at looking at mission leader wives or spouses and see where they could plug them in, instead of just leaving them out there hanging out to dry. I think they could do better” (A01, 1236).

Another participant viewed the struggles of spouses of mission leaders in the larger context of the whole denomination that it was connected to:

I felt that in [denomination] there needed to be more of an understanding of the role of women, especially the role of women leaders. I think that’s something that has not been discussed enough. I think that’s something that we have not been open enough about. I think there are a lot of women, in fact every woman almost that I’ve talked to on our field, felt that they were frustrated with their role: who are they when they get to the field? what is their role? ... I think a lot of women really, they have a lot of questions (and) frustrations of who they are as a person. (A07, 663, 369)

She added more later, in regard to the restrictive policy, “I didn’t feel that was a good policy to make. I felt it was good to let people work together in (married) teams if they are properly suited. Teams can support each other so wonderfully ... I felt bad that that policy was coming in. I didn’t like that they couldn’t work together anymore (A07, 781-785). When asked whether she would have fought against it if they had stayed on, she

said, “I’m not really a fighter, but there are some issues that I would fight for, and that would be one of them!” (A07, 789). In reference to her husband she added, “because he was going on the out too, that was one of the issues he would deal with because he felt strongly that we should work as a team, we always worked as a team” (A07, 793). She went on to recount how her husband had put couples into the regional leadership positions while he was the mission leader, and how he had encouraged the wives to visit the fields and be full partners in the ministry (A07, 795-811). She concluded, “I felt a little concerned ... because there was some movement of discontent that obviously we felt bad about, and you always hate to see a wonderful thing happen that is not going to continue wonderful” (A07, 823).

The participant who was expected to perform domestic tasks at the communal headquarters said, “I think sometimes we are expected to do too much, and that’s something, like we have a lot of staff members here who are moms and they do put in a lot of hours here helping, because they see the need and the things to be done and they do them, and then their kids, I just think there has to be a balance (F11, 670).

Some of the participants spoke to the need for member care. One woman said:

Since then (my situation), and now I think that (member care) would happen. It was a hole and we were pressing a button as far as, a lot of people discourage this, and I am really glad you are doing this because it is a hole that has been, an area that has been missed, but I think at least with [our mission agency], we have at least caught up. (E10, 357)

Later she elaborated, saying that they do now have “member care for our missionaries and people who are retired ... but in the leadership that still hasn’t happened ... at least we are advancing a bit in that area, but we could use a little more for [North American] member

care” (E10, 817-830). When the researcher restated what this woman had said earlier about that being a “hole” in member care, she responded, “yes, yes, not intentional” (E10, 832-834).

In regard to member care specifically for spouses of mission leaders, another participant concluded that it:

... probably would be helpful to have some kind of seminars and some kind of materials for women, because you know anything, knowledge gives you empowerment, and if women - I think (I) had a very special experience in the way it all happened for us, but it's not always the case. Not everyone will have the situation I've had. I have talked to other missionaries who have been transitioned down, who are so grieving being a missionary and missing that, and I don't know if they have anything to help them with transitioning. So I think the more that's developed in this area, it probably would be helpful. (B05, 293)

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapters two through five answered three of the five sub-questions of this thesis:

1) What biblical and theological issues shape the study of the trailing spouse in mission leadership? 2) What bodies of literature inform this study? 3) What are the experiences of trailing spouses of mission leaders and how do they adjust to their new reality in order to reach satisfactory resolution?

Chapter six deals with the fourth and fifth sub-questions of this thesis. The fourth sub-question was: 4) What conclusions can be drawn from these findings? Summaries and conclusions are offered for each category created by the findings. The fifth and final sub-question of this thesis was: 5) Using the conceptual framework of missionary transition and re-entry, what resources and recommendations can be given to mission agencies as a result of this study? Practical resources have been incorporated into appropriate categories of the conclusions, and appear in Appendices 7-10.

Recommendations to mission agencies appear at various points throughout the conclusions, but are given specific attention under a separate heading of their own.

The findings of chapter five, and the conclusions and recommendations of chapter six, lead to an answer for the main research question of the thesis: Are trailing spouses of mission leaders a well-stewarded commodity, or are they a lost resource in the mission

community? The answer is revealed and its rationale explained at the end of the chapter. As a postscript, recommendations for further areas of study, related to the subject and focus group of this thesis, will be made by the author.

Conclusions to Findings

From the findings, conclusions were drawn from participants' experiences on the mission field, in their transition to mission leadership in North America, and from their new reality as a trailing spouse in mission leadership.

Mission Field

Findings were reported in five categories: missionary call, education, spiritual gifts, ministry, and marriage and ministry ethos, and will be summarized accordingly.

Missionary Call

All of the participants reported a call to be a missionary, and for all but two of them this was an individual call that occurred prior to meeting their husband. As a result of this call upon their lives, many of these women were motivated toward educational preparation for active participation in missions, and each of them married a like-minded husband. Together they proceeded to a foreign field to begin their missionary careers.

Education

All of the participants received undergraduate level education, most at Bible colleges or Christian liberal arts colleges. Four out of ten went on to graduate studies in seminary. Many of the participants spoke of taking courses in Bible, theology, missions

and intercultural studies. Through their education, these women were personally invested and equipped for active missionary service. In addition, all but one participant reported studying a foreign language on the mission field, and two also went on to study tribal languages in order to minister most effectively. These women made a significant investment of time and energy in pre-field education and foreign language learning, many of them during years of childbearing and mothering of babies and young children. They were motivated to study and attain a high level of proficiency in the language, in order to be most effective in communicating the gospel and reaching people at a heart-level in their own language. Together, these women's educational background and foreign language learning prepared them to be active participants in the furthering of the kingdom of God in their respective fields of missionary service.

Spiritual Gifts

Some of the participants had taken spiritual gift inventories somewhere along the way, and many of them had received feedback on their spiritual gifts from leaders and colleagues in ministry. A high percentage of the participants listed teaching, administration and hospitality as their strongest gifts. Otherwise, their gifts were variously distributed – bearing credence to the fact that spiritual gifts are bestowed without regard to gender, as discussed in chapter two on the biblical and theological framework. Most notably, from these women's educational preparation and spiritual gifts flowed their respective ministries on the field.

Ministry

Not surprisingly in this group of educated women, several of whom listed teaching among their strongest gifts, several went into teaching ministries on their fields. They all related their teaching experiences as parallel ministries to that of their husbands, who were also teaching. It is important to note that from the findings there was no sense in which any of these women felt they were in a secondary role to that of their husband. These couples were colleagues in ministry, and it was this partnership that each woman relished in the memories she relayed of travelling together with her husband to carry out teaching ministries. These women expressed great fulfilment in the investment they were making in students' lives through their active involvement in teaching.

Likewise, those in church planting also spoke in terms of ministry together in partnership or parallel to that of their husbands – some as a part of a team of missionary colleagues working in the same endeavour and others on their own as couples in remote areas. They all spoke of home, family and ministry interchangeably, explaining that the lines between personal life and ministry are not as clearly drawn in this kind of ministry. They recalled leading Bible studies, extending hospitality and conducting worship services together as partners with their husbands, complementing each other's gifts in the roles they took on.

A variety of other ministries were recounted, all of which bore witness to the fact that these women enjoyed their status as full-fledged missionaries in their own right, as ambassadors of Christ and representatives of their mission agencies on their respective fields. With the exception of one participant, all of them had clearly defined, often

multiple ministry roles, rather than a singular role as the supportive wife of a missionary husband. None of them referred to themselves as “missionary wives.” Instead, they spoke of working together or in parallel ministries with their husbands, based out of offices in their homes – and of having titles, assignments, job descriptions, budgets, and serving on field committees, boards, etc. All of this reflects recent trends in the western society from which these women come, and in the evangelical mission community of which they are a part, as outlined in chapter three on related literature.

Marriage and Ministry Ethos

The couples represented in this study shared a marriage and ministry ethos of mutual value, respect and support for one other. This ethos, combined with these wives’ full participation in ministry on the field, reflects (whether purposely on their part or inadvertently) both the revised theological interpretation on women in ministry and the increasingly egalitarian marriages in North American evangelicalism, as discussed in chapter two on the biblical and theological framework. Some of these women were even functioning as leaders with their husbands (in one case, over her husband) and in this regard spoke of mutually complementary roles.

Only one couple stood out as a possible exception, on account of the wife not finding a role in ministry after redeployment, still processing their premature exit from the field and coming to terms with her place back in North America. However, it is important to note that her personal struggles and season of life issues did not appear to be shaped by a different marriage and ministry ethos than that of the rest. In fact, she spoke

of her husband's value of her current supportive role as being that which helped her find (at least partial) resolution in it, and looked toward future involvement again with him in ministry. As reflected above, all of the others told of fairly well-defined mutually inclusive ministry roles on the field, where they were happily busy doing their best to balance ministry with marriage and family responsibilities. In recounting their lives as missionaries, looking back, many of these women could hardly believe they had accomplished so much, in the midst of their valued roles as wives and mothers – in many cases of families that by today's western standards would be considered large (three or four children).

Some participants' children were away at MK boarding schools, and others had nannies and/or house help to enable their full participation in ministry. A few of them mentioned that their home-based ministries helped them balance the demands of full-time ministry and motherhood. They seemed to have the best of both worlds, which would perhaps even be envied by some of their North American counterparts. Many of them reported that their ministries were very fulfilling, enabling them to use their education, spiritual gifts, skills and experience. As mentioned above, all but one were either partners in ministry and/or leadership with their husbands, or worked in parallel ministries – all with full support and endorsement from their husbands. They were full members on their missionary teams and served as representatives of their mission agencies. These women had a clear understanding that the role they played as individuals and couples was part of the larger context of what their mission agencies and evangelicals as a whole are seeking to accomplish in the world as they make disciples in every nation, in obedience to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

Only one woman expressed dissatisfaction with the change in her role when her husband became a field leader and, as his wife, she had to fit into a predetermined role as the mission's guest house manager for the field. In that situation, she pushed the envelope to broaden the parameters of this ministry, in order to continue ministering in the areas she felt most passionate about, all of which were related to leadership and teaching in some way. But in spite of her efforts, later when speaking of their marriage and ministry ethos she mentioned how that was the one year she felt they did not work in partnership as they always had from the beginning of their ministry life together.

As reported in the findings, all of these women spoke in the plural "we" in reference to most of their ministries. It was immediately apparent that these women represented couples that have a different ethos than most in the individualistic western corporate culture, where husbands and wives most often have separate careers in different spheres. Even those who are involved in lay ministries in their churches often have separate ministries from each other. Pastors and their wives also increasingly lead separate lives in North America. With women more free to pursue their own calling and career, and with a normalized cultural standard of living which is not easily afforded on a pastor's salary, the pastor's wife no longer comes 'two for the price of one' in ministry with her husband. Although most are still very involved in their churches, many also have outside careers that consume much of their time and energy, thereby precluding their full-time ministry in partnership with or parallel to that of their husband. Furthermore, although there are an increasing number of churches that hire both a pastor and his qualified wife into official positions, these situations are still few and far between and are

not well accepted in many denominations – some deterred by past or present negative examples. Certainly, as with all married couples in organizational leadership, clearly defined roles and lines of authority and accountability must be in place in order for this to be successful. Still, most Christian (and secular) organizations, including churches, tend to avoid these situations rather than deal with their inherent complications.

While a marriage and ministry ethos of equal and full partnership in ministry is relatively rare in North America, this is not so with missionary couples – at least not with this sampling of those who progressed into mission agency leadership. Again, while some couples had separate ministries on the field, viewed by these participants as parallel ministries, they were in any case part of the same team (in some cases consisting of just the two of them) working full-time in the same sphere and interacting largely with the same people (i.e. the same Bible institute, the same church plant, etc.) Their work overflowed to their home, with all of them speaking of hospitality ministry in their home as part of their work, in which they served together with their husband and children. Additionally, all of them seemed to work out of offices in their home, sharing computers and other equipment. As stated earlier, the lines between work life and home life are not as clearly drawn for missionaries as they are for most of their western contemporaries. For missionaries this has always been an expected and normal part of life on the field. The North American concept of individuality in marriage and career, although known to missionaries, is foreign to most of their experiences.

The missionaries in this study whose husbands were promoted to field leadership in their foreign contexts, largely functioned together with them in that ministry, each in

complementary roles but working side by side in the ministry. It seemed not only acceptable but, in fact, expected that the wives would function closely with their husbands in their leadership roles in the mission office on the field. Except for the one case mentioned above, in which the field director's wife automatically served as the guest house manager, they were allowed freedom and flexibility to work out their roles and share the tasks. They were also together entrusted with responsibility for mission agency personnel and finances – half a world away from their mission agency headquarters.

Two couples went on to be responsible for whole continents (or more) of missionaries. One was referred to as a regional couple, while the other woman made it clear that in her mission agency there are no dual roles, so as not to be confusing to their personnel. While in her own context her husband was the one with the leadership title, she cited other cases in their mission where it was acceptable for a married woman to be in the leadership position. Nevertheless she, too, spoke of her husband's regional leadership role in the plural, as though it were hers as well (and also followed this pattern in reference to his mission leadership position in North America). In these regional positions, as in field leadership, couples were again given freedom to divvy up the tasks, and were trusted with even greater responsibility for personnel and finances, still half a world away and not under the watchful eye of their mission agency headquarters.

All of these women spoke in very positive terms about ministering alongside their husbands on the mission field, and several expressed how much they loved working together, emphasizing that they had always worked together as partners in ministry. As alluded to above, one woman said that for a few years she was actually in leadership over

her husband in the mission structure on their field, but stressed the fact that this did not pose a problem for them as a couple or for their mission agency, which appeared to be the most egalitarian among the evangelical mission agencies represented in this study.

Several of these participants relayed how their husbands also valued working together with *them* as partners in ministry – how they encouraged their calling and passion for ministry, affirmed their gifts for ministry, supported their further studies, and how these men appreciated their wives’ input and assistance with their own ministries. Only one woman lamented the loss of this partnership the year her husband was asked to lead the field, as mentioned already. She said that they no longer worked together, since much of her time was taken up with domestic tasks associated with her role as guest house manager. She did not fully realize until later that this was a microcosm of a larger issue in the mission agency and denomination, wherein many women (at least on this woman’s field and in her travels to other fields with her husband in mission leadership) are reportedly frustrated by a lack of role clarity, and the lack of value that is conveyed to them as persons.

Mission Leadership

Findings were reported in five categories: proposal, transition, mission agency ethos, status and role, and longevity. Due to their pivotal importance, the conclusions for status and role will be divided into two separate categories.

Proposal

For seven out of ten participants the proposal of mission agency leadership was made to their husbands only, without communication from the mission agency in regard to what this would mean for them as spouses. For at least a couple of these women it was communicated from the mission representative making the proposal that they would be welcome to travel with their husbands (for one of these, only upon her husband's later inquiry). For at least two women the proposal was clearly being made to their husbands only, with the implication that they as wives would need to be agreeable in freeing up their husbands to travel without them. For one of these women it was clear that as her husband accepted the new position she would need to consider other career options, as her career with the mission agency would thereby come to an end. When her husband was promoted she would be disqualified due to a policy preventing her from working in the mission agency headquarters, which was the only ministry option available to her in the organization, in close geographical proximity to where her husband would need to be. One other woman would only understand the full impact of a similar policy after making the transition into mission leadership, and two others would later experience the negative effects of a restrictive policy brought into effect by a new denominational president.

Only three out of ten participants were officially included in the proposal, and only two of them for a dual role in mission leadership, having the proposal presented to them as couples (as noted earlier, one of these clearly stated that the leadership title would be her husband's alone, however discussion about her new official role and title in the organization occurred at the time of the proposal). Clearly, there was a difference

from the other participants' cases in the ethos of the mission agencies these two women represented. There seemed to be no double-standard for the role of a married woman as a missionary on the field, in field or regional leadership, or in mission leadership in North America. In all spheres both spouses were considered and new positions, roles and ministries were assigned in accordance with their gifts and abilities, where possible.

Regarding the proposal, the common denominator in almost all of these cases was pressure for a decision combined with the lack of time and information to properly consider the proposal. Most of them said "yes" before they had even seen a job description for the husband or fully considered the ramifications for the wife. A few of the husbands inquired as to what their wife's new role would be, but they were given very little information from the mission agency regarding their spouse's future status or role. A couple of the wives got an inkling through letters from another leader's wife.

Meanwhile, most of these women were not really thinking much about their status and role anyhow, as they were immediately thrown into the task of transitioning themselves and their families through a major upheaval in their lives – in 'survival mode', as one woman said, for another international move. While these women were dedicated to ministry, they had learned enough about these transitions to realize that their children needed to take priority during this time, especially for those with preteens and teenagers who would be likely to have the greatest struggle in leaving their friends and familiar surroundings. Also, the logistics of such a move seemed to invariably fall on the shoulders of these wives. As for their status and role, most assumed that the particulars of their future ministry would settle into place later, as they generally always had up until

that point. These women were loyal to their mission agencies and had enjoyed fulfilling ministries on the field, having been affirmed by their mission leaders for their fruitfulness. They trusted them, so why would they have reason to expect anything less from them back in North America?

Transition

During the transition, a few of the participants expressed being cared for by their mission agencies, either materially or through the moral support of boards. For some, informal member care came through spouses of other mission leaders, either from those further up in the hierarchy or from a former mission leader's spouse. No one said that they had received formal member care, transition care or counselling for themselves or their children, and surprisingly few seemed to even have member care personnel in their mission agencies. If they did have member care personnel, their efforts were generally said to be directed toward missionaries and their children on the foreign fields. Some of these couples were actually to *become* the member care providers in their role as mission leaders – yet they did not have adequate member care or transition care for themselves, nor training in this area to minister to others.

Only two women spoke of what appeared to be deliberate, although informal, pastoral care for mission leaders and their spouses, which came through highly supportive and personally involved board members. The rest were left to sort through transition and re-entry issues largely on their own. Once the husbands went off to work at the mission headquarters, in almost all cases the wives were left with the responsibility to alone

provide ‘member care’ in order to transition their children – which is why their own transition struggles were often delayed.

Several participants reported going through difficult transitions (or cited others who had) and one of them chided herself for not having said anything to anyone, including the member care person in her mission agency. These spouses did not want to put their husband’s new role, which they were very supportive of, in jeopardy in any way. Instead of speaking up they chose to suffer in silence, until they were presented with the possibility of an anonymous voice to be heard through participation in this study.

Mission Agency Ethos

During and after their initial transition, it did not take long for these participants to ascertain the ethos of their mission agencies – especially for those in the most restrictive agencies that had policies of exclusion, in other words, policies preventing spouses of mission leaders from continuing their career in missions by holding official positions at the mission agency headquarters. Other than the possibility of ministering at the headquarters of *another* agency which may happen to have its headquarters in the same area, ministry in their own agency would likely be the only global-missions-related avenue open to these wives in their geographical location in North America and with their level of education (bachelors or masters – excluding them from eligibility for teaching in most missions departments of Bible colleges or seminaries, although some had taught on the field). The mission ethos of exclusion precipitated a significant struggle for at least three participants (in addition to the author of this study, as illustrated in the foreward).

For those mission agencies which had less restrictive policies, spouses were usually permitted to work in the mission agency headquarters, however, were restricted to working in different departments than their husbands. This seemed strange to these women, after having worked in the same home office with their husband on the mission field, half a world away from the watchful eye of the headquarters. Again, some of them were even jointly responsible for field or regional finances, with safes located in their own homes or adjoining mission offices. When they moved to the head office of their mission agency in North America, they were baffled by what seemed to them like a reduced level of trust. Nevertheless, some of the women were able to find fulfilling roles in other departments, and the best-case scenarios appeared to be in mission agencies that had an atmosphere of flexibility, allowing for these spouses to travel with their husbands, such that they still had opportunity for partnership together in ministry, as they were accustomed to on the field. Mission agencies *without* this flexibility only exacerbate the struggle for spouses of mission leaders who still want to be involved in their husband's ministry. Most agencies encourage this involvement, but it appears many do not offer the flexibility and support to make it truly viable.

Faced with one or the other of the above two levels of exclusion, some spouses of mission leaders opted to work elsewhere, apart from the mission agency. At least two of the participants in the study initially worked at other jobs or in former careers. Granted, the reason for this was most often financially motivated (due to buying a house or to afford Christian schools). But others (like the participant for whom the micro-cassette broke and could not be made into a transcript), when faced with less than satisfactory

work options inside the mission agency, instead returned to their secular professions and carved out a new life for themselves in the North American workplace. At least three other women who declined interviews for this study appeared to fit into this category as well. It seemed that their lives were now separated from the mission agency and their husband's mission leadership position to such an extent that they did not consider themselves eligible to be involved in this study. In fact, some of their evasive attitudes toward it may have betrayed potentially unresolved hurt and resentment, like the woman whose story was relayed by one of the participants in this study.

In contrast, the most inclusive ethos and atmosphere toward spouses of mission leaders were found in mission agencies that displayed no double-standard between what they promoted on overseas fields and their *modus operandi* in North America. As noted already, some of the couples represented in this study worked in the same or adjacent field offices, entrusted with the responsibility for dozens of missionary personnel and mission agency funds to run these fields. These couples were quite free to divvy up the tasks of field leadership between the two of them, being accountable to regional or mission agency leaders for their respective roles. When married couples in North American mission leadership are afforded this same inclusive ethos and atmosphere of trust, along with the kind of flexibility mentioned above, according to the findings of this study this creates the most satisfactory ministry situations for former-missionaries (both husbands and wives) who are now serving together in mission leadership. Along with this, accountability and member care are necessary to keep everything in check – again, in accordance with what has generally been provided to couples in overseas field and regional leadership.

In addition to an ethos of inclusion, flexibility, trust, member care, and accountability, participants said that a relaxed, friendly family atmosphere (as opposed to a corporate atmosphere) was most helpful for them and their children. This was consistent with the experiences of these families on the mission field, where they had their “missionary family” of colleagues who were more like brothers and sisters, and where children address these adults as “Aunt” and “Uncle.” Several of the participants emphasized that an open atmosphere to the involvement of their children was very conducive to their adjustment and continued sense of inclusion in the ministry world of their parents. As one woman said (with no vested interest as she had no children), the transition to younger leadership in mission agencies means that family compatibility must be taken seriously and pursued intentionally.

If all the above ethos and atmosphere is viewed by mission agency and/or denominational leaders and boards as being too ‘soft’, ‘informal’ or even ‘unprofessional’, then they need to seriously examine whether the headquarters of their mission is still representative of their global mission enterprise and community overseas, or whether it has become more like a secular corporation in North America. As one participant in this study intimated, when those from the secular corporate world are brought in (to work or serve on boards or in other key positions), irregardless of their professional qualifications they usually do not understand the missionary life or ministry ethos. If these individuals are allowed to push their corporate agenda on a mission agency/denomination, it devolves from the *organism* it was originally intended to be, into merely another *organization*. When this is the case, the chasm between missionaries and

their headquarters becomes increasingly wider. Little wonder that so many missionaries struggle when they move from the field to their mission agency headquarters.

Status

In regard to their new status, for all but one of these participants the transition of their husband into mission leadership meant the end of their missionary status, which was the first serious loss that these women reported, precipitating identity crisis and initiating a grieving process for most. Intensifying this, for some of these participants the loss of status combined with restrictive policies, meant the revocation of their hard-earned credentials in the mission agency/denomination. One woman said that she had not realized the implications of this until she was at a denominational conference as the senior mission leader's spouse, but could not vote as she had when she was a missionary. It seemed strange that although she was now even more in touch with the issues being voted on (since through her husband she was closer to the decision-making core) she was now ironically excluded from it.

Only one participant specifically said she was able to retain her missionary status in the organization, since her agency's offices in North America were referred to as "sending bases" that function much like their overseas mission compounds. Several of the other women wondered aloud why they could not retain their missionary status, or be assigned some sort of adjunct-missionary status, since they felt that alongside their husbands they were still part of the missionary enterprise (through leading it!) In their hearts and minds they are still missionaries – only instead of serving on *one* field they

now serve the larger mission community *worldwide*. Since this was the heaviest loss for the participants in this study, it seems that mission agencies/denominations could make what would amount to a small gesture on paper, but would make a huge difference in the lives of these couples, in order to retain their status as missionaries, thereby preserving their dignity and self-identity.

Role

For most of these participants it became apparent that their well-defined roles in ministry overseas had been contingent upon their status as a missionary and their geographical location outside of the North American context. As suggested in chapter two, when their husbands moved to the mission agency headquarters, these women were awarded a vicarious role of honour, yet many of them felt dishonoured and disqualified from the daily life and work of their mission. With this day-to-day reality, offers from the mission to travel with their husbands seemed more like tokenism, especially when there was no active role in ministry for these women during such travels. Trips and conferences thus degenerated into merely fringe benefits for the spouse of a mission leader who travels, sometimes to exotic places, on the arm of her husband and feels like an ornament on display. While some of the participants seemed satisfied with this, and a couple mentioned the informal member care they provide for women on the fields they visit, in light of the major contribution that these women made as missionaries, this level of ministry involvement pales by comparison. Is their resource being well-stewarded? Is their time being well-spent? Conversely, is the mission agency/denomination's money

being well spent (i.e. for spouses' airfare, meals, etc.) with so little return on the investment? One woman implied that it seemed more like a 'show' by the mission agency to have wives travel with their husbands, than a sincere gesture to welcome their active, meaningful participation in the ministry.

In light of the above, mission agencies need to be much more intentional to incorporate these spouses, who in some cases are not even asking for official positions at the headquarters or remuneration for their volunteer services – *just a piece of the action!* These women are used to more than standing around and participating in what often seems like superficial 'chit-chat' at official functions and travels. They are called, gifted, trained, experienced and generally highly motivated individuals who still want to actively contribute. As such, mission agencies ought to wisely steward their resource by valuing them and putting them to work at home and when travelling with their husbands abroad.

The satisfied testimonies of those spouses who *did* have active roles (like mission-related jobs at the headquarters, teaching, leading seminars, writing articles, etc.) should be reason enough for mission agencies to realize that these women are at their best when they are afforded a place of meaningful involvement. They are happiest (and so, in turn, are their husbands) when they feel like they are personally answering the call of God on their lives to ministry in global mission. According to the findings from this study, most participants said this could be best furnished through paid official positions at the mission agency headquarters, in partnership with or parallel to their husband's role. However, some – especially those with young children at home – would be satisfied with well-defined unpaid roles which would provide official recognition and resulting avenues for

active participation alongside their husband's ministry. In both of these cases, value and support is further shown by the mission agency providing titles, office space, budgets, etc. These things were mentioned in the supporting literature, as well as by the participant in this study with the most clearly defined role in parallel ministry and close proximity to the ministry of her husband in mission leadership. Although they may seem like trifles, they are important gestures which make all the difference for the roles of these women and how they are viewed by others in their agency – as they do for men in leadership.

In regard to the particulars of the roles of mission leaders' spouses, none of the participants in this study reported receiving any written or unwritten guidelines for their role as the spouse of a mission leader (one of them was glad for this, in that it gave her freedom to develop her role together with the board, which they did intentionally – but this was the exception). As reported, most were not initially looking for guidelines, since they were still too busy finding, purchasing and setting up homes, and busy with the task of transitioning children to life and school in North America. They assumed they would receive guidelines later, and that their role would fall into place in due time. However, once their homes were set up and their children were through the hardest part of the transition, most of these women faced the reality of role ambiguity and confusion.

One of the participants was offered a part-time role by her husband as his assistant, but acknowledged that in her mission agency this is only possible on account of their being off site from the headquarters. Again, ironically this couple experiences increased freedom and is trusted more as an offsite leadership couple than those under the watchful care of the mission headquarters. Another woman from the same agency also

made a clear distinction between couples in regional leadership (overseas and in North America) and those whose husbands are in mission leadership at the headquarters – the latter being less partnership-oriented and not as conducive to the active involvement of spouses. From the examples of participants in this study, a correlation could be made to the more corporate nature and structure of denominationally-affiliated mission agency headquarters, which dictated precedents, policies and procedures affecting the roles of mission leaders' spouses.

Conversely, another participant said that their mission agency policy manual mandated that both of the spouses in mission leadership would play major roles at the headquarters. This woman's role had been discussed in the proposal and transition similarly to how women's assignments are now routinely discussed on the mission field. Unfortunately, the domestic role she was placed into seemed to be non-negotiable in light of the mission agency's current vacancy in that area. What would have happened had she refused to fill it? Would this couple's eligibility for the leadership role have been in jeopardy? Perhaps the mission agency would have been forced to come up with another solution, thereby freeing this woman to develop in other areas, as she had desired to do. Instead, it seemed that by her and her husband's passivity (couched in terms like "as missionaries you do what is needed") they were 'enabling' what had become an unhealthy situation. As the interview progressed, in spite of her efforts to remain positive, this woman's underlying dissatisfaction kept seeping through – and who could blame her? While the role fit this woman's obvious hospitality gift, capable leadership and strong work ethic, it consumed all her time and energy. Again, this prevented her from pursuing

other desired involvements in mission leadership with her husband, and fulfilling the expectations of others for her to be knowledgeable about mission personnel and ministry.

A couple of other participants took positions offered to them in their mission agencies that were not necessarily in line with their gifts and abilities, but they were willing to pay this price for the privilege of continued participation in the mission. As reported in one case, the role was changed so that it fit the woman's abilities and interests, thereby conveying value to her as an individual. With flexibility added, in order to furnish travel with her husband, she seemed to have ended up with the ideal situation for her. Two other women had similarly ideal well-defined roles, at least for a time, but everything changed when the new denominational president came in and enacted a more restrictive policy – perhaps under pressure from secular corporate influences which he or others before him had brought into the organization, as discussed earlier.

The woman with the most clarity in her well-defined roles in mission leadership alongside her husband, appeared by far to have the highest level of satisfaction and resolution among the participants of this study, as will be further explored under the title of 'resolution' in the following section. In comparison with the comments of all the others, it may be concluded that spouses who are acknowledged for their experiences on the field, respected for their fruitful ministry and intentionally included in leadership in North America, in accordance with their gifts and abilities, have the greatest potential for feeling valued by the mission and fulfilled in their well-defined roles in mission leadership. Additionally, instead of policy-driven roles based on set precedents, flexibility for working out the individual's own unique role in mission leadership and

finding an appropriate niche for her continued meaningful investment, convey value to her – usually reciprocated by loyalty and motivation for her to give her best in the mission agency. As mentioned already, official titles, remuneration for her ministry, travel, an office and budget are also elements that convey value and further definition to roles (even if the funds for some of these amenities are actually raised by the couple). In such mission agencies people are valued over policy and clarity replaces ambiguity in regard to the spouses' role, including lines of authority and accountability, also mentioned earlier.

Longevity

In regard to longevity of couples in mission leadership, participants voiced in various ways the tentative nature of these mission leadership roles. For many, it appeared that longevity was predetermined by policies that regulate terms of office. Three of these women spoke about succession plans, although none explicitly used this terminology. Due to the fact that longevity does not seem to be largely contingent upon the choice of these couples, the researcher was not able to ascertain a correlation between role satisfaction and longevity. This is an area for future study, specifically to examine attrition among those in mission agency leadership.

The question of longevity, although it was generally met by reactions of discomfort in the participants, again brought out the characteristic of flexibility – in this situation as a means for mediating satisfactory 'role exit' (recalling the title of a recommended book by that same name in the literature chapter). When couples and their children are considered as to the best time for transition out of the mission leadership role

this conveys value to them. Once again, when people are valued over policy, the most satisfactory outcomes can be negotiated and attained. Also, when member care is given in the transition, just like the transition *into* mission leadership, couples and families can leave ‘in tact’ and move on to the next phase of their lives and ministries.

Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership

Findings were recorded in five categories: issues, children, resolution, attitude and advice to mission agencies. Since there were so many issues, and many of them related to losses, these will be dealt with as a separate category of their own.

Issues

One of the main ways that these spouses of mission leaders said they connected with their husbands in ministry (albeit limited in scope as suggested earlier) was by travelling with them. However, there were many issues that challenged that ideal.

Most notably, low salaries in mission leadership (many raise their own support) coupled with the cost of living in North America created the need (whether felt or real) for spouses to work, especially to pay for mortgages and put their children through college. Some spouses were permitted to work in the mission headquarters, but low wages prevented long-term financial feasibility, and also conveyed a lack of value. Although all of the participants were educated professionals like their husbands, they were not usually remunerated as such, since the jobs available to them were most often in administrative support. Additionally, since less than half of the participants listed administration as one of their spiritual gifts, this, too, may be a reason behind why some

opted not to work at the mission headquarters, although none of them expressed it as such. At this juncture, as mentioned earlier, many spouses take leave of further involvement in the mission agency, choosing instead to re-create a new career or revive an old one in another sphere. Some are required to upgrade their qualifications in order to return to their professions, and others go for further academic study or professional training in order to be eligible for positions in North America – whether mission or ministry related, or in the secular marketplace.

Even when participants were working in the mission agency headquarters or elsewhere in order to supplement the low income of their husbands in mission leadership, financial feasibility for the spouse's travel was still seen as prohibitive in many cases. Coupled with this, there seemed to be a high level of ambiguity on whether or not the mission agencies provided funds or permitted couples to use mission air miles to make spouses' travel possible. When mission agencies allow for these things – either by giving spouses their own budgets, building funds for them into the budgets of their husbands, or by giving them tax-deductible charitable fundraising status through the agency for their ministry – travel becomes possible and value is conveyed to spouses of mission leaders. As one woman jested, her husband is happier when she travels with him and sleeps in his bed! On that basis alone, the travel of spouses in mission leadership should be seen as a benefit to the agency, promoting fidelity and health in marital relationships. Creative means should be sought by mission agencies, in order to make travel together a possibility for these couples.

Another issue related to travel is flexibility. For those participants who chose to work in the mission agency, in order for them to remain connected to their husband's ministry, flexibility was needed to work around the couple's travels. Some co-workers may not understand or appreciate the perceived 'privileges' that spouses of mission leaders are given in this regard. For this reason, endorsement and explanation are required from the mission/denominational leader or board. Lack of understanding and the resulting complaints from colleagues should not be the impetus for instigating restrictive policies, nor should the poor performance or inconsistency of a mission leader's wife in her role be reason to prevent all spouses from working in the mission agency headquarters. Each case should be handled separately and each individual should be evaluated on the merits of her own work, as asserted by one of the participants who said that she would have to "face the music" if she were not fulfilling her responsibilities. If lines of accountability are in place and proper evaluations are done, with good communication and flexibility, spouses who work in mission headquarters and also travel with their husbands can be accommodated – it just requires prioritization, intentionality and concerted effort by the mission agency. When this is the situation, as it was for the woman above, it can be very workable and once again these women feel valued by their mission agencies on account of being considered and included.

When spouses were prevented from working in the mission agency headquarters or for other reasons chose to find work outside, the challenge was to find a flexible enough job to allow for travel. Most often, to accommodate this flexibility they ended up in wage-paying jobs unrelated to their professional training and missionary (or other

former) career. In this they were also devalued, some even demoralized, although a couple of participants said that they considered it a privilege to serve their family and provide for their own travels in this way.

Several participants spoke about finding volunteer ministry roles in their churches, and it appeared that many of the spouses turned to this sphere when excluded from meaningful ministry in the mission agency. They would rather be involved in lay ministry than abandon their call to ministry altogether. However, this church ministry sometimes prevented travel for these spouses and, conversely, travel prevented church ministry since most ministries require high commitment and, in many cases, weekly reliability. Likewise, outreach to neighbours and involvement in community programs posed a challenge for these frequent travellers. Some spouses felt the pull to be more involved as ‘salt and light’ by foregoing travel and being present in their own communities. A couple of the participants said that their mission agencies emphasized church ministry and community involvement for their leaders (in order to be good examples), which only added to the pressure that these couples feel to ‘be all things to all people’. In most cases the spouses largely shouldered these responsibilities which, in turn, restricted travel and participation in their husbands’ ministry. It seemed like a double-edged sword, a no-win situation for these women, several of whom expressed frustration at their lack of ability to balance everything and have the best of both worlds.

Other participants in this study found opportunities to volunteer in their mission agency, however menial tasks like monthly mailings, although helpful to the mission agency, are a relative waste of these women’s time and talents. Aside from this,

volunteering their services to *any* mission, church or community cause often competed with the felt (and likely real) need to financially supplement their husband's income and also provide for their own travels. Although most of their husbands are highly educated and experienced individuals, the evangelical Christian ministry sphere does not compensate them accordingly. Especially when children are entering college, the need for an additional income increases. However, when women find substantive career employment, their level of responsibility often ends up precluding travel and connection to their husband's ministry – and the vicious cycle continues!

Children themselves also prevented spouses' travel, since couples often felt one parent should be home and this responsibility also fell to the mother. Grandparents sometimes stepped in, but those living in a city far from their home base, as one woman explained, do not have this option. Inviting friends to come and care for their children in their home was a practice in one case, but it seemed that most participants were not willing to leave their children with other caregivers, even if they were older. Instead, they accepted their domestic role and grew accustomed to staying home with the children while 'dad' was often away travelling. A couple of women saw it as a necessary sacrifice they made for the Lord, in support of and as a contribution to their husband's ministry. They viewed it as a season of life issue and looked forward to when their children would be older and they would be free to travel with their husband. But for younger mission leaders this was still far off into the future, and they had to settle for relative un-involvement. Occasional travel in North America was more feasible in the meantime. The participant who said her mission agency has become family-compatible, explained

leadership weekends to which spouses and children were invited and at which their meaningful involvement was intentionally facilitated. Another spoke positively about a yearly mission event to which they took their children. With the trend toward younger leadership, mission agencies will need to more intentionally address these issues, in order to facilitate more healthy, happy, well-adjusted and meaningfully connected families in mission leadership.

Losses

Other issues that these participants raised were related to losses they have commonly experienced. In addition to the monumental losses of status and role, the next significant loss for these spouses was ministry together in partnership with their husbands, over which both wives and their husbands in mission leadership grieve deeply. Perhaps only former missionaries (and some former pastoral couples) can truly identify with this loss, which leaves a feeling of emptiness that is difficult to fill in any other way. Two participants who had each spoken in very solemn terms about this sad loss in their lives, seemed to come to life again when they shared how they had found a way to at least partially recapture it, through leading ministries together with their husbands in their homes, connected with their churches.

Several participants also cited loss of ministry, in terms of their own eligibility for significant ministry in global mission. In many cases, due to loss of status and lack of any official role in the mission agency, there was a corresponding loss of opportunity for fruitful ministry using spiritual gifts and expertise. This, in turn, led to a feeling of not

being needed or wanted, indeed being devalued and disqualified from the ministry of the organization they had faithfully served in for so many years. This was very demoralizing and even disillusioning for some of these women, precipitating identity crises and self-esteem struggles. This should be cause for serious concern in the missionary member care community. Mission agencies that create these situations by their structures and policies must be challenged to change.

Other losses cited by these participants (most of which are common in all missionary attrition cases and some of which are parallel to foreign service, military and international business families) were as follows: missionary family, high quality Christian or international schools, international travel, expatriate lifestyle, familiar surroundings, opportunity to use second language and cultural knowledge, nannies, domestic help, standard of living, and for some even the loss of their health precipitated by stress from the difficult transition.

The cumulative loss in some cases was so heavy that it exacerbated severe emotional and psychological crises accompanied by significant transition, adjustment and re-entry struggles. For at least a couple of these trailing spouses, unresolved cumulative loss appeared to have slowly developed into low-grade depression (leading one to also question whether this may be a factor for any of their husbands as well – but this is another suggestion for further study). Some of the participants in this study would likely have benefited from professional member care, transition care and counselling, had their symptoms been recognized by others in their mission agencies and professional services been offered to them as they were to the author of this study, paid for directly by the

mission (one redeeming factor in the ‘series of unfortunate events’ suffered at the hands of this mission agency).

Psychologists have recognized that the grief experienced on account of such significant loss is very similar to the cycle of grief over the death of a loved one – except in the case of trailing spouses in mission leadership there is a lack of closure, since many of these spouses by merit of connection to their husbands and mission agencies, live with frequent reminders of their losses and the death of their dream as a missionary.

Appendix 7 shows “The Normal Grief Recovery Journey Interfaced with the Experience of Repatriation for Trailing Spouses,” which helps to illustrate the process that these individuals (in mission leadership and in other spheres as well) progress through as they grieve over losses and adjust to their new realities. Although the chart shows linear chronological progression through the stages of grief, it is important to note that each person’s experience is unique, and people normally cycle back and forth between negative emotions and positive ones as they gradually make progress toward loss-adjustment. As reflected on the chart by the placement of the grief cycle, a common thread among the participants in this study was that as wives and mothers they experienced delayed transition, including their realized losses and the resulting grief, which usually surfaced only after seeing their family through the period of transition, generally in the second year of their repatriation from the mission field to North America. In several cases, as noted above, unresolved loss and grief lingered even longer, resulting in what appeared to be low-grade clinical depression. For one or two of these women, the negative results of unprocessed loss and grief seemed to still be evident years later, following them into retirement.

Children

Questions related to participants' children may seem beyond the scope of this study, but most parents of MKs today recognize how fundamentally their ministry decisions affect their children's lives – both positively and, in some cases, negatively – which also has a reciprocal effect on the parents and their ministries. In regard to the children of those who have repatriated for mission leadership positions in North America, mission agencies have been very remiss to consider them, in spite of all the member care rhetoric regarding MKs in the past couple decades. Just like member care for trailing spouses of mission leaders seems to have 'fallen through the cracks', so also their trailing children have been inadvertently overlooked. Especially for preteens and teenagers who, due to the promotion of their parent(s) to mission agency leadership, have been pulled out of their lives on the field, the losses seem monumental and transitions to North America are often difficult (even as corresponding losses and difficulties are experienced by teens who are taken overseas from their lives in North America).

The challenge of fitting into North American culture is daunting for many TCKs (Third Culture Kids – those who have spent formative years in another culture who find identification neither in that context nor in their passport culture, thereby being caught in a third culture somewhere in between and experienced in common with other TCKs or 'global nomads' as some have aptly called them). As mentioned by a few participants, there are now many excellent resources in re-entry and transition care for MKs/TCKs, but none of these participants spoke of any specific intentional care or guidance through their mission agencies for their children. This is simply unacceptable for evangelical mission agencies which profess to value and care for their MKs.

Like their parents, the children of participants in this study experienced many of the same losses, in particular the missionary family, which was amplified if the mission agency headquarters was very corporate in nature and did not intentionally welcome them or foster meaningful involvements and interactions. When mission agencies *do* include children of those in leadership, participants reported the positive impact that these environments provide for families. Along with this, when parents upheld a positive view toward the mission agency, participants reported that this created positive attitudes in their children. In juxtaposition, an ethos of family openness, especially during transition difficulties, helped to draw the family together for mutual support.

Some mission leaders have taken their children on mission trips with them, which participants in this study recognized as being very beneficial to bonding and for the children's sense of connection to their father's ministry, in addition to helping them still feel part of the mission family and to ease some of their losses. All of the mothers expressed a strong desire for this, but surprisingly few of these families had actually done it, citing lack of funds and children's schooling as the precluding factors. The higher ideal of travelling together as whole *families* was even more financially and practically prohibitive, although as noted earlier it was sometimes possible for travels in North America.

If these mission leadership couples recognize the benefit of and strongly desire their children to be connected to the ministry by having them join some of their mission travels, and if the greatest barrier to family travel is *finance*, then as for spouses, so too, for children, mission agencies must find creative ways to help overcome this obstacle.

Suggested means for doing so are through fundraising from special-interest donors (grandparents or other relatives, friends of the family, mission colleagues and current or former missionaries), through parents' ministry budgets, air miles, and tax-deductible charitable status through the mission agency to raise funds for going on short-term mission trips connected to the parents' ministry. At stake is the health of these families and the potential long-term negative effects on children – both personally and in regard to their involvement in future global ministry, which due to their backgrounds they are often well suited for. Again, these longstanding issues in mission leadership must be addressed in the mission community, in order to effect positive changes that will make a difference in the lives of individuals and families, resulting in their increased participation and effectiveness in reaching the world for Christ.

There is another significant part which families in mission leadership can choose to play in order to enhance their children's eligibility for participation in the mission. According to the participants in this study, the second greatest barrier to children's involvement at the mission agency headquarters and in travels with their parents was cited as being *school*. As the woman from the most inclusive, family-friendly mission agency implied, parents who sincerely desire to connect their children to the ministry ought to seriously consider home education – in order to facilitate greater intentionality, flexibility and opportunity, thereby creating the connection through meaningful participation. Coupled with a family-friendly ethos and atmosphere in the mission agency, in the way this woman described it, home schooling seemed to be the most conducive and healthy option, especially for young mission leaders and their spouses who

increasingly want to make their ministry a family affair. Of course, the responsibility for home education also tends to fall mainly on the shoulders of the mothers. However, current trends in North American home education, especially among Christians, show more fathers becoming active educators of their children. Some are already successfully combining this involvement with other societal trends toward reducing the work week and working from home. In the future it is conceivable that couples in mission leadership will share more equally in the balance between ministry and home responsibilities, making the home education of children an even more attractive and realistic option.

In addition to home schooling, shared childcare among colleagues was also cited by the above participant as another practical way that involvement and travel for spouses and children is promoted in their mission agency, with the byproduct of fostering a sense of extended family, similar to the missionary family overseas. Mission leaders and agencies that care about the health of their families must discover and utilize such creative means to keep mission leadership families together, through practical facilitation of their involvement in mission.

Lastly in regard to children, participants in this study emphasized that when both spouses in mission leadership made their children a priority – for example, being there for important extra-curricular events and enjoying activities together – children generally seemed to make good adjustments and the family remained in tact, even amidst the father's many travels. Furthermore, when travelling fathers made an effort to phone and write their children, and when their families at home intentionally informed themselves and prayed for the father's ministry, his colleagues and missionaries under his leadership,

this fostered healthy connections for the children as well. Even so, in spite of all these efforts, all of the participants re-emphasized the difficulty of having the father away on so many long trips, and this seemed to be the greatest challenge for families with children. While long trips with many stops along the way are usually more financially prudent and logistically practical for the mission agency, consideration needs to be shown toward (and by) mission leaders with children and teens at home, in order to find more workable solutions that reflect increased awareness of and care for the health of families in mission leadership.

Resolution

In regard to satisfactory resolution, a provocative conclusion from this study is that most spouses of mission leaders are willing to sacrifice their own status and role even to the point of becoming a ‘lost resource’ in mission, in order for their husband to be in a position of mission leadership, especially, as some asserted, when they see their husband’s obvious suitability to the role. These women’s deeper motives might be called into question, on the basis of what could appear to be pride, power and prestige – but this study did not address the issue at this level with the participants. It is also possible that, in order to convince couples to take these leadership positions, mission agencies and their representatives making leadership proposals might also appeal to some of these same carnal human desires – but this, too, went beyond the scope of enquiry for this study. Perhaps these are other (albeit darker) elements of evangelical mission leadership that could be addressed in future studies.

Further, in regard to resolution for trailing spouses in mission leadership who have come to the conscious or unconscious realization of their lost resource in mission, it is at this pivotal point that some of them choose to carve out another life for themselves apart from the mission agency – through further education, professional certification or training, creating new careers, returning to former careers, involvement in church-related or other volunteer ministries, and participation in their children’s activities and community programs. Nevertheless, if the case studies of this project are indeed representative, irregardless of the personal cost (financially, emotionally or otherwise) the majority of spouses of mission leaders, to one degree or another, still attempt to fulfill their call by remaining in the sphere of their mission agency. Many of the participants of this study could not conceive of doing otherwise and in most cases, at the very least, ‘representational duties’ not dissimilar to those of foreign service, military, CEO and politicians’ wives (as discussed in the literature chapter) called forth their occasional involvement. It must be noted here that the variables related to call, education, spiritual gifts, ministry experience, age, season of life and personality type (which was informally addressed with most of the participants in this study) all influenced the level of satisfactory resolution in each case.

According to the findings of this study, overwhelmingly the most satisfactory resolution for these trailing spouses (and the best stewardship of their commodity on the part of the mission agency) is facilitated when these individuals are given well-defined official positions in mission leadership. This generally includes the accompanying titles, office space, budgets, etc., as listed earlier. Close proximity to the husband’s office and

ministry also most effectively furnishes these couples' partnership in ministry ethos.

Travel together is a big part of this as well – not just 'sightseeing' for the wife, but having a purposeful and significant ministry role during these travels.

When all of the participants' responses were analyzed, in conclusion it may be stated that two out of the eleven wives interviewed for this study fit into the first category, having reached the highest level of satisfactory resolution in the end. In addition, out of the eight other women who were asked to consider participation in this study but declined, two of them expressly stated that their busy, fulfilling roles in mission leadership precluded their participation. It is possible that others who failed to respond to requests for participation may have also done so for the same reason, not even having enough time in their busy schedules to respond to the emails. However, among these non-responders it was not known if the emails were even passed on to the spouses of mission leaders, in spite of every effort on the part of the researcher to reach them, or if (as in the cases of at least two evasive potential participants cited earlier) others failed to respond due to issues at the *opposite* end of the involvement spectrum.

The next satisfactory resolution for spouses of mission leaders, according to the findings of this study, is an official well-defined position in another department of the mission headquarters (again, generally including accompanying titles, office, etc.) which, although more separate from the husband's office and ministry, is still seen by the wife as a parallel ministry contributing to the global mission enterprise. For those in this second category, financial provision and flexibility for travel with their husbands is still a key component. A seemingly ideal case in this category, was a participant who said she does

photography and writing for mission publications when she travels with her husband, fulfilling tasks which are integral to her job in another department of the mission headquarters – thus feeling valued for her important role and having the dignity of her travel expenses being ‘legitimately’ paid, in exchange for her services rendered.

The above two most satisfactory levels of resolution for spouses of mission leaders bear witness to many of the favourable elements suggested in the related literature.

It is important to distinguish a third level of satisfactory resolution, which relates mainly to those in denominational mission agencies who are working in unrelated departments at their headquarters. These women do not have the same level of satisfactory resolution as those in the second category. While they may have found great satisfaction in other denominational ministry areas (as a couple participants expressed), they still grieve the loss of ministry together with their husbands and participation in global-mission-related ministry. However, when funds and flexibility are allotted for occasional travel with their husbands, and participation is made available for them related to the global enterprise – at least a partially satisfactory resolution can be achieved in these situations. In addition, when couples find other fulfilling ministry in which to participate together, this enhances their feeling of connectedness and satisfaction on account of the opportunity for partnership in ministry.

At the other end of the spectrum, the least satisfactory resolution according to the findings of this study is experienced by spouses who are prevented by policy from having any official position or role in the mission agency. Loss of status, position and resulting role ambiguity and confusion leave spouses in this category with an identity crises and

self-esteem struggles, due to the lack of opportunity to fulfill their call and have further meaningful participation in global mission. Having been thus devalued and demoralized, invitations from the mission agency for involvement (travel, dinners, sitting in on meetings, volunteer work, etc.) are perceived by them as being little more than superficial tokenism. The spouses in this category are truly a “lost resource” in mission, and those who have created such structures and policies of exclusion will someday be called into account for their lack of stewardship of God’s human resources.

Participants in this study who could, based on their own testimonies, be seen as fitting into the above category had the greatest difficulty in transition. Accordingly, they also experienced the greatest challenge in finding an alternative satisfactory resolution. As a result, they experienced the deepest levels of cumulative loss, grief and dissatisfaction. It was very difficult for them to reach the loss-adjustment stage in the grieving process. Seemingly ‘stuck’ in the cycle of grief, at least a couple of women in this category with unresolved loss appeared to never have entirely emerged from the process. It is possible that the author of this thesis-project never fully emerged from it either – coming from a mission leadership context that appeared, by comparison to the others in this study, to be a worst-case scenario. Although very painful, perhaps it was necessary for this to happen to a ‘crusader’ personality (ENTP, according to the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator), in order to prompt a serious study of this nature.

Most of the participants in this study fall into categories somewhere in between the two extremes of satisfactory and unsatisfactory resolutions. At various points in their mission leadership journeys in North America, some could be seen as fluctuating between

categories, in accordance with their changing jobs and roles at the mission agency headquarters, which (among other factors) were most poignantly impacted by the introduction of restrictive policies or the removal of the same.

Attitudes

Also in between the above extremes, could be detected various levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, as conveyed through the participants' attitudes toward their own realities. It was not difficult to pick up the positive attitude that exuded from the woman with the highest level of satisfactory resolution in her clearly-defined mission leadership position. Neither was it easy to miss the attitudinal struggle that came through the words of spouses who were the least satisfied, and others who were only partially satisfied with their resolution.

A remarkable similarity in the partially satisfied category was the negative attitudes which seeped through the otherwise creative rationalizations, betraying unsuccessful attempts at convincing themselves (and the interviewer) of having reached a fully satisfactory resolution, when in reality they more than likely had not. In such cases, there was a sense in which these women were still processing their realities, especially on the level of their spiritual resources to accept their circumstances and live contentedly within their less-than-fully-satisfactory contexts. A few participants admitted to requiring periodic attitude adjustments along the way, and at least one of them seemed to be making some during the interview. One woman's description of how she adjusts her thinking, although admirable for its wisdom and depth of insight, could be labelled by

cynics as ‘spiritual gymnastics’ to make her theology fit with her present experience. Nevertheless, these women are to be commended for their attempts at coming to terms with their lot in life as trailing spouses of mission leaders – by God’s grace and through the power of his Holy Spirit, finding the secret to contentment ‘in any and every situation’ even as the Apostle Paul did (Phil. 4:12).

Several participants emphasized that in the fellowship of other spouses of mission leaders, burdens are lightened and attitudes improved through the validation of experiences and feelings, and especially through praying together. It is therefore highly recommended that colleagues within and outside of the mission agency be found for mutual processing, encouragement and ongoing support. The mission community, specifically missionary member care personnel, can help to facilitate these connections in order to create intentional networks and support groups for wives of mission leaders in North America. It is encouraging that efforts toward this end are already being made in certain contexts within the evangelical mission leadership and member care community.

Practical resources to prompt self-understanding, as well as discussion in support groups, are provided in Appendix 8 entitled, “Normal Responses to Repatriation for Trailing Spouses” and Appendix 9 which gives a corresponding blank chart entitled, “Mapping My Personal Journey of Repatriation.” These have been adapted by the author of this study for the use of trailing spouses in North American mission leadership, and for sharing with their families and support groups. These resources are also more widely applicable and can be used by trailing spouses in other contexts as well.

Due to family concerns in repatriation for wives with children, it is important to re-emphasize that the progress of these trailing spouses in mission leadership through the stages of transition is normally delayed by about a year, as reflected on the charts in Appendices 8 and 9 (and Appendix 7 referenced earlier) by the placement of the grief cycle in relation to the transition phases, in comparison with previous more generic versions which placed the grief cycle about a year earlier. In addition, in order to reflect the transition process specific to repatriation, these charts were modified to follow the journey from the “host culture” (mission field) to the “home culture” (North America), beginning from the point of pre-departure from the field and moving through the various phases of transition, up to two years after their arrival home. Note that there may be differences for spouses of mission leaders whose home culture was not previously in North America, but who find themselves in mission leadership in North America, which goes beyond the scope of this thesis-study but would be another interesting niche for a future study. The chart in Appendix 8 also reflects the transition of repatriation on three different levels – outward (sensory), inward (attitudes and feelings), and upward (spiritual) – indicating common transition characteristics, thoughts processes, feelings and behaviours associated with but not exclusive to each stage. These are provided to aid in self-understanding, by suggesting words and phrases which describe the experiences of trailing spouses as they move through the stages of transition. These suggestions serve as prompts for filling out the blank chart in Appendix 9, which trailing spouses can use to map their own repatriation journey.

Recommendations to Mission Agencies

Although participants had already contributed a wealth of indirect advice to mission agencies throughout the interviews, as reflected in the above conclusions, they were also given the opportunity to contribute specific advice to mission agencies, as recorded in the findings chapter. The following is a summary of their advice, combined with concepts drawn from the above conclusions, to reinforce the most important points.

To begin with, an inclusive mission ethos and structure leading to mission leadership proposals being made to *couples* is preferred over the exclusive, patriarchal structures that focus on husbands only. Secondly, several women implied that the proposal and decision came with time pressure, yet without adequate information from which to make an informed decision. Much pain could be avoided if mission agencies were more forthcoming about the implications for mission leaders and their trailing spouses. To aid potential mission leadership couples and the mission agencies asking them, gleaned from the findings of this project Appendix 10 contains a practical resource entitled, “Questions Couples Considering Mission Leadership in North America Should Ask The Mission Agency and Information Couples Should Disclose.” Likewise, Appendix 11 contains the corollary, “Questions The Mission Agency Should Ask Couples Considering Mission Leadership in North America and Information the Mission Agency Should Disclose.” As the cases in this project have shown, many of these questions were difficult to anticipate during the time of the proposal and the decision-making process. From their experiences, both positive and negative, the participants in this study have contributed a large body of information, from which the above questionnaires were developed.

To the outsider, the questionnaires provided in Appendices 10 and 11 will seem exhaustive, exhausting and perhaps even unrealistic in their scope and length as to their usability in real-life situations. But those who have been through the experience of transition to mission leadership in North America will undoubtedly agree that the more questions which can be raised and answered on both sides of the equation, the better chance everyone has for an informed mission leadership proposal being forged, agreed upon and actualized. In some instances, more thorough knowledge about the mission agency headquarters, its ethos and resulting atmosphere for spouses and children of mission leaders may actually prevent couples from making a choice that will be unhealthy for the wife and children, and detrimental to the couple's effectiveness and continued fruitfulness in ministry. Nevertheless, the intended goal in providing these questionnaires is the increased potential for more satisfactory resolution in the lives of trailing spouses of mission leaders in the future – such that their commodity will be better stewarded.

Another area that participants in this study emphasized throughout these interviews and in their specific recommendations was the need for better, more intentional member care and coaching for mission leaders, their spouses and children – especially during the most intense time of transition from the field, repatriation and adjustment to the homeland. Overall, more empathy and consideration for spouses and children of mission leaders in North America is required in the making of mission structures, policies and procedures. As stated earlier in the conclusions, leadership philosophy and organizational structures of exclusion must be revised, toward a more inclusive atmosphere that values people over policy. In organizational frames

terminology (Bolman and Deal, 1997), mission agencies which largely operate in the structural and political frames must learn to function more effectively in the relational frame which, coming from foreign cultural contexts where relationships are highly valued, these missionaries generally best relate to and will benefit from.

In regard to women, although some evangelical mission agencies have come a long way in the past few decades on the role of women in ministry and leadership, the reality is that many still lag behind and require more intentional work in this area – in regard to women's roles as missionaries, in field leadership, and in the upper echelons of mission-wide leadership. Double-standards and illogical inconsistencies must be eliminated between what is allowed on mission fields and what is practised in evangelical churches, mission agency and denominational headquarters in North America. Women must be freed to minister as God has called and gifted them, including wives of mission leaders in North America. As reflected in the literature, a more healthy balance in the body of believers is found in leadership teams that include women, single and married.

As for married couples serving closely together in mission leadership, it is recommended that if they are suited to working well together and are desirous of working as a team, they ought to be permitted to do so. Clear lines of authority and accountability must be in place to safeguard couples working closely together in mission leadership (and their organizations), as for all other cases where couples serve together in organizational leadership. Flexibility should be given to these couples to work out the division of tasks in accordance with their spiritual gifts and expertise, rather than having to fit into roles set by precedence or vacancy. Balance in work, sabbath rest and vacation time, and between

mission responsibilities and home life, should also be encouraged for both spouses in mission leadership, not just for the wives. Those providing guidance to the couple, such as mission boards, should through accountability ensure that this balance is being actively sought. Throughout all of these aspects related to couples serving together in mission leadership, an atmosphere of *trust* similar to that which was afforded in field and regional leadership away from the headquarters, is needed for couples ministering together or in parallel ministries at their mission agency headquarters in North America.

Finally, the ‘hole’ in missionary member care must be filled by intentional focus and attention given to mission leadership couples and their children, whether through trained member care personnel or caring and personally involved boards. The findings, conclusions and practical resources of this thesis-project have been specifically developed to help mission leadership couples and evangelical mission agencies in North America, and should be made available at conferences in the evangelical mission community, such as “Mental Health and Missions” and “Pastors to Missionaries.” In actual fact, before official publication of the final version of this thesis-project the author had already been invited to present this research and accompanying resources at both of these venues in the year immediately following its publication.

Answer to the Main Question

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of this study have revealed the answer to the main question of this project: Are trailing spouses of mission leaders a well-stewarded commodity, or are they a lost resource in the mission community? In comparison with the scope of their ministries as missionaries overseas, the unfortunate

answer in many cases is that these spouses have become a lost resource since returning to North America. This study has shown that most of these spouses actually desired continued partnership in leadership and ministry with their husbands, which could best be furnished through well-defined meaningful roles in the global mission enterprise, including opportunities to use spiritual gifts and expertise gained from ministry overseas. It is important to note that husbands in mission leadership also valued their spouses' involvement and partnership in ministry, and grieved together with their wives when corporate organizational structure and policy prevented this.

These leadership couples felt the most satisfaction and fulfilment when they could extend their partnership-in-ministry ethos from the mission field into their roles at the mission agency headquarters – mutually respecting, valuing and supporting each other in ministry, and balancing their ministry with a healthy family life. In an inclusive atmosphere of joint or parallel ministry, flexibility, trust, member care and accountability, couples and their children in mission leadership will not just survive, but really *thrive*. These are the main factors that must be in place in order to transform this lost resource into a stewarded commodity in the mission community.

Recommendations for Further Study

Many of the conclusions of this qualitative research project, and the resulting recommendations offered to mission agencies, reflect similar elements seen earlier in articles by various authors, and especially in papers presented by Laura Mae Gardner, as cited in chapter three on literature. A quantitative study is also currently being conducted in the form of a questionnaire circulated to spouses of mission leaders in the United

States. The results of this study and other similar future studies of this nature, across evangelical denominational and interdenominational mission agency lines, will shed even more light on this subject and serve to further heighten its profile in the evangelical mission community. An expected outcome is that mission agencies will actually change their structures, policies and procedures to foster an inclusive atmosphere and furnish more satisfactory resolutions for spouses of mission leaders, resulting in effective and fruitful ministries for mission leadership couples in the years to come.

This thesis study is also of potentially broader significance, due to the fact that it is generalizable beyond evangelical mission agencies, applicable to similarly ‘missional’ organizations in other religious spheres – for those which would call themselves “Christian” but also for other religious groups that have global ‘mission’ enterprises.

In the secular sphere, even as many of the experiences of foreign service, military, international business, CEO and politicians’ wives were generalizable to trailing spouses in mission leadership, so also the reciprocal is true. Not only will this broader set of individuals and organizations recognize many similarities in the pages of this study, they may well benefit from the practical resources provided in Appendices 7-10.

Certain elements of this study will also be recognized by other types of trailing spouses. The first category is former-missionary spouses who follow their husbands home from the mission field into pastoral ministry in North America, or into positions as professors at Bible colleges and seminaries. To a lesser degree, those who represent attrition from the mission field, for whatever reason, will relate to some of the elements of this study, especially in regard to the repatriation transition, loss, grief and re-adjustment after serving as missionaries.

Other types of trailing spouses, who are not necessarily making international transitions, can also identify with certain parts of this study. Of special note are those who transition to mission leadership from pastoral or other Christian ministries, or even from secular professions in North America (although these are rare). While these trailing spouses in mission leadership likely served overseas with their husbands in years past, they may already have moved through the stages of transition and will presumably have processed their loss and grief along the way. Even so, there are still new adjustments to be made in any move to another ministry sphere, and the spouse's previous involvement or un-involvement in ministry will have an impact on that as well. Roles for each spouse will have to be renegotiated once again.

A final type of trailing spouse who may find some level of correlation in this study, is one who moves from an active role with her husband in pastoral ministry in North America, to life as the spouse of a Bible college or seminary professor, or as the spouse of a leader in a corporately-structured Christian organization. Much will depend on the ethos of inclusion or exclusion in these institutions and organizations, as to the impact on trailing spouses, as well as these spouses own level of interest in connection and participation in ministry with their husbands.

All of the above examples of trailing spouses (and perhaps more which could be generated) bear similarities to trailing spouses of mission leaders in North America and, as such, will find this thesis-project to be relevant and helpful. Future studies could focus on each of these specific groups. Lastly, as stated in the literature chapter, the trend will likely continue toward increased instances of male trailing spouses in all of the above categories, and future studies could also focus on this emerging phenomenon.

APPENDIX 1

MORALE LEVELS IN JOB TRANSITION

Stage 1 – Crisis of Entry – The Enthusiasm/“honeymoon” Stage

- * **Motivation:** beginning of new work
- * **Time factor:** This begins immediately and lasts about 6 weeks into the new job
- * **Accompanying feelings:** enthusiasm, anxiety, motivation, apprehension and energy
- * **Core issue:** Personal competence and self confidence; “Can I or can I not do this job?”
- * **Need:** realistic expectations – of the job, oneself and one’s coworkers

Stage 2 – Crisis of Arrival – The Starkness Stage

- * **Motivation:** negative surprises; the price tag becoming apparent
- * **Time factor:** This generally hits after about 6 months on the job.
- * **Accompanying feelings:**

✓ slight to severe depression	✓ limited outlets because of loss of friends
✓ increasing stress	✓ psychosomatic illness
✓ questioning God’s call	✓ decreased productivity
✓ perceived narrowing of options to “sink or swim”	✓ frustration – anger, grief, disillusionment, loss.
✓ selective memory of old job – only the good; none of the bad	✓ possible increased use of chemicals

- * **Core issue:** Ability to persist; “Shall I go or stay?”
- * **Need:** listening ear; wise counsel; a break

(Gardner, Laura Mae. 2001a, 1)

Stage 3 – Crisis of Acceptance – The Anger/Initiative Stage

- * **Motivation:** the need to find resolution – “How am I going to deal with this?”
- * **Time factor:** This stage follows about 8 months to one year after beginning a new job.
- * **Feelings:** anger (most critical factor), desire to speak out, reassessment, initiative to change
- * **Core issue:** Tolerance level; “What changes must I make in order to survive?”
- * **Need:** This person, in order to get out of his “pit”, needs to experience some success in dealing with the obstacles facing him/her

Stage 4 – Crisis of Re-entry – The Moderation/Acceptance Stage

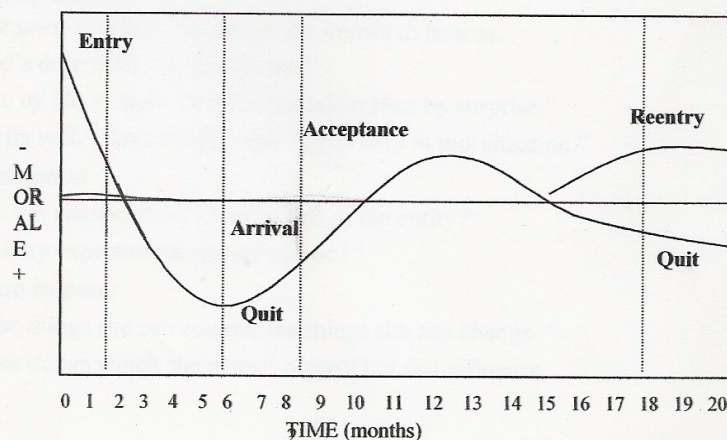
- * **Motivation:** “I believe I am where the Lord wants me to be, and I’ll do the best job I can until He moves me out.”
- * **Time factor:** It takes about one-and-a-half years to reach this stage
- * **Feelings:**

✓ a measure of contentment	✓ new dependence on the Lord
✓ satisfaction of having survived big hurdles	✓ less apt to be disillusioned about self or others
✓ new awareness of personal competency and the Lord’s sufficiency	✓ less preoccupation with the present and more able to look to the future

- * **Core issue:** Balance of reality with expectations; “This isn’t easy but I can do it.”
- * **Need:** reality checks – “I’ll do my best but I probably can’t get everything done or make everyone happy.”

Note on the diagram below that there are two periods when a person is likely to consider quitting. Resigning during the first period, stage two, when stress is highest and morale lowest, would be somewhat premature. Once they have entered stage four, assessment is likely to be more reasoned, based on the “fit” of the job and not as heavily influenced by the negative aspects.

DIAGRAMM



APPENDIX 2

INTRODUCTORY EMAIL LETTER

Dear _____:

Please allow me to introduce myself...

Having graduated from the Arrow Leadership Program in 2005, I continued on to the Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and have completed the first of two residencies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

During the two years in Arrow I was in dialogue each session with the D.Min. mentor from Gordon-Conwell about a possible D.Min. project. I had three ideas, the first two of which he quickly passed over in favour of the third. I had been hesitant to even mention the third, thinking I would be too emotionally involved for it to be a 'valid' subject. However, my very passion for the subject and the uniqueness of the subject itself as it relates to leadership, was what piqued this professor's interest. For the past two years, my husband and others in leadership have been urging me to pursue this project, so now I am actually doing it. I have a second reader, who heads up the DMin. in Member Care at Columbia International University, who only took me on because she sees such a need for this topic to be addressed in the mission leadership community.

So, what does this have to do with you? I believe you are part of a small sector of people for whom my topic has had a direct impact. I am writing to ask you to read my attached project prospectus. Then I would like you to prayerfully consider involvement in my qualitative research project, by participating in a confidential one hour interview with me. I am also interested in obtaining the e-mail addresses of others you know, who also fit into this category. There is only a small segment of people this subject applies to within each organization, however, if we take a cross-section of mission agencies and denominations, we will likely find that the cumulative impact is much greater, with many people affected by this issue.

Please pray before you read my attached Project Prospectus, as it may conjure up some buried issues and emotions that you thought were long resolved and would rather leave alone. Quite frankly, I would rather leave it to rest now too, but I feel God is calling me to raise this issue to a level of awareness that it has not had in the past. My goal is that mission and denominational leaders will recognize that this is an issue, be willing to provide appropriate member care and transition counselling, and be open to changing structures in order to value people over policies.

Now I hope I've got you interested enough that you will sit down with a cup of coffee or tea when you have a chance, and read through my Project Prospectus. Please drop me a line to let me know if you are willing to be interviewed in person or by telephone, as I have done with several others for whom face-to-face contact was not possible. I will send you a list of questions to ponder beforehand, so that you will know what to expect.

Thank you in advance for considering my request. Please respond either "yes" or "no" at your earliest convenience.

Julie

Julie A. Tiessen
Study Leave
[MISSION AGENCY]

Project Prospectus

Over the past couple of decades, mission agencies have become increasingly aware of the need to provide physical and emotional care for their overseas personnel. Many of the larger organizations have specialists in member care, who facilitate medical and pastoral care and, when needed, professional counseling for their staff and families, both when they are serving overseas and when they are on the home front.

Following the example of multi-national corporations, in the past decade the more specialized area of transition care and counseling has been developed and implemented for missionaries – both for those being redeployed from one field to another and, to a lesser degree, for those who return home and resign from the mission. The most common reasons for the latter are health-related, and in order to transition older children entering university or the workforce.

There is, however, another category of missionary personnel in transition that has been neglected, mainly because of the relatively small number of people it affects in each individual organization. These are the former-missionary spouses of those (mainly men) who are called home from the mission field to take positions of leadership at the ‘head office’ of their mission. While there may only be, at the most, a handful of individuals in this category in any one given organization, a cross-section of several organizations will show that this phenomenon actually affects a significant number of people – each of them veritable ‘islands’ in their own denomination or mission agency.

The author of this study is one such individual. After having actively served in Russia for two terms (teaching in a Christian university the first term and co-leading a field of forty missionaries with her husband during the second term), she found herself back in her homeland, [country], with her husband having been appointed as [mission leadership position] for [mission agency]. Although the decision was made jointly by this couple, based on prayer, wise counsel and obvious suitability to the role, the implications of the resulting transition were not fully realized for the spouse until after their belongings had been shipped home from Russia and her husband was about to begin in his new position.

In addition to active deputation in churches, this woman had been serving in an official capacity as a [mission leadership position] for two church districts during their extended three-year furlough (enabling her husband to finish his PhD in Intercultural Studies). In this capacity, she worked out of a home office, on a property adjacent to the district office, and traveled around the two church districts conducting seminars and meeting with missions committees. However, as the date approached for her husband to begin his new leadership role at the national office, this woman found herself in a situation where, due to policy, as a spouse she would not be allowed to retain her current position or hold any other official position on the head office payroll (regardless of whether she worked in that office or out of her home office). Unless she accepted a position in another [denominational] ministry (i.e. a local church, or chaplaincy – outside of her calling, education and expertise) she would be without a paid official role and would, therefore, be forced to resign from the mission – losing her status as a missionary,

having her [mission agency credentials] revoked, and, although married to one of the denominational leaders, being without denominational voting privileges.

She was saddened to discover that other spouses of leaders in her organization had also been subjected to this policy and had their credentials revoked. These women had quietly suffered with transitional issues, choosing not to ‘make waves’ in case it might bring about negative consequences for their husband starting in his new role. Through the counsel of mentors in the Arrow Leadership Program, she appealed in writing, asking for the policy to be reviewed and that she be retained as a “missionary on special assignment” (referring to her unofficial ministry with her husband in his new leadership role) or, at the very least, be moved to the status of “missionary on study leave of absence,” since she was pursuing post-graduate studies. After several inquiries and then only communicated orally third-person to her, the latter suggestion was eventually accepted, making it possible for this woman to retain her credentials as long as she was enrolled in a study program.

In the meantime, over several months this situation had created a significant transition crisis. The [mission agency] [member care position], who works closely with the woman’s husband in his new role, after learning of the crisis suggested that the mission would cover the cost for a few sessions of transition counseling from a professional psychologist at the [clinic name] in [city], [country]. The woman went for four sessions and was helped through the symptoms of her transition, however the root of the problem at the organizational level has not been addressed, leaving this woman and others in her organization who fall into this category without satisfactory resolution.

An informal oral survey of other spouses in this category, both within and outside of the author’s organization, has revealed the need for awareness and pro-activity at the organizational level. A cursory glance shows that the missionaries called to take up such positions of leadership in their mission organizations are of a high caliber and are generally married to spouses who are also of a high ministry caliber. Indeed, it may be said that, in many cases, these spouses have been an integral part of making their spouse into the leader he/she has become, in order to qualify for such a ‘promotion’. However, many of these spouses now find themselves in a position of significant role deprivation, struggling to adjust to a corporate organizational structure that largely excludes their further significant contribution.

In the opinion of the author, the resulting crisis and/or transition difficulties stem back to the unique missionary marriage/ministry ethos, where both spouses have often been fully engaged in ministry. In many cases, spouses are jointly involved in leadership positions on the field, or individually as leaders of ministries and committees. In many cases, each spouse is viewed by their organization as a missionary in their own right, and given official assignments and financial support through the organization, placing all spouses on par. (This is in distinction from North American pastoral couples, who do not all necessarily share this kind of marriage/ministry ethos, with an increasing number of spouses working in unrelated professions). As such, when one former-missionary spouse is promoted into denominational or mission leadership, the other spouse experiences transition issues, which are largely ignored by their organizations.

The North American corporate office atmosphere is one that is foreign to the missionary couple, who have generally worked from a home office on the field. Now they are faced with distinctions between office and home, employee and spouse. Unless the spouse occupies an official position he/she is, in effect, now a 'visitor' at the head office of the 'company' they used to work for. While their spouse goes off to work each day, they are left to face reverse culture shock, transition and reintegration issues. At a base psychological level, it is as if he/she has been 'fired' – yet many continue, by virtue of their spouse's role, to return to the office that used to be their base, interacting with former colleagues and even former 'bosses' who, for all intents and purposes, effectually dismissed them. This can create emotional distress, ranging from mild discomfort to severe trauma.

For those individuals from organizations which do *not* have policies excluding spouses and who take on official positions in their national office, the degree of satisfaction seems to vary, depending on the correlation of their role to their 'calling' and 'passion'. Many are not permitted to work in the same department as their spouses.

Those who are *not* permitted to work in official roles related to their calling (presumably missions) or in other satisfactory roles and, thus, opt to hold no official position in the organization (for these or other personal or family reasons) are in most cases permitted or encouraged to participate in seminars, conferences etc. and, in some cases, to travel with their spouses on official trips. There are varying degrees of opportunity, involvement and remuneration, depending on the organization.

The spousal function at official mission or denominational events ranges from spectator to participant, administrative assistant to seminar leader/speaker, and everything in between. Unfortunately, in many cases, a spouse's role is reduced to what the author of this study labels an "arm ornament" or, in other words, to their duties as "First Lady" (or "Second," "Third" etc). For those who were more integrally involved in leadership and are still in the prime of their ministry life, much of this seems like tokenism and, as such, is dissatisfactory to both themselves and their spouse's sense of well-being in the organization.

While most of these individuals are strong supporters of their spouse's ministry in the organization, they are not accustomed to this arrangement, as they have enjoyed a more defined, active role as a partner in ministry on the mission field. For some of them, social interaction at official functions is fulfilling enough – some see this as a 'perk', others view it as a ministry of informal member care, but for many others this is a comparative 'waste' of their time and talents. For this reason, some spouses eventually choose not to attend such events and do not largely involve themselves in their husband's ministry. They find their own new ministry-world or 're-create' themselves in a related field. Others, faced with the financial challenges of life in North America, are forced to find work in unrelated fields, simply to make ends meet. For, while their spouses have been promoted to managerial levels or higher, they are faced with the reality that most Christian organizations are not able to keep up with secular pay scales. The resulting financial issues only serve to magnify transition struggles for these couples, many of whom have never lived and worked in the North American context on one salary before.

Further, in the area of financial assistance for a spouse's occasional involvement, this varies as well. In some cases honorariums are given, in others it is paid contractual work, but in most cases spouses who minister in official capacities at mission-related events do so on a voluntary basis without remuneration. Some organizations pay for travel and/or expenses for the spouses of their leaders to attend these events. Some organizations figure these expenses into the leader's salary, others allot budgeted monies, others allow for tax-deductible fundraising status, while others deal with things on a case-by-case basis, or not at all. It appears that many organizations do not have consistent policies and procedures on these issues.

In light of the above, the following questions will be raised in this study: Are mission organizations aware of these people and these issues? What, if at all, do these organizations provide by way of member care for spouses of their personnel who fall into this category? What policies are in place to permit or restrict official positions in the organization for spouses of leaders? If permitted, are paid positions in the area of calling and passion (presumably missions) available for missionary spouses on the home front? If not, are there other options for official positions at the head office that may or may not provide fulfilling ministry options for these spouses? If not, to what degree is 'unofficial' ministry or involvement related to their husband's role permitted or encouraged? What kind of financial assistance is available to support this? If spouses are not permitted to work in salaried positions in the organization (or choose not to for various reasons), but for financial reasons still need to work, are these individuals able to find meaningful roles outside of their organizations? What is provided by these mission agencies or denominations in the area of member care (i.e. transition and/or career counseling)? What are some of the ways that these spouses resolve their transition issues and reintegrate? To what degree are these individuals able to adjust? To what level are these individuals satisfied with their new reality? What are the factors that have the greatest impact on adjustment and satisfaction? What effect does this have on the spouse who was promoted to the leadership position? What is the long-term effect on each spouse and on their longevity in the organization or attrition from it? What other issues would these spouses like to have addressed?

The above are the questions that this study seeks to answer, through a qualitative approach, using data from interviews and surveys of former-missionary spouses who fall into the above category, from a variety of evangelical mission denominations and agencies. The goal is to heighten awareness of the issue, in order to address the problem at the level of organizational policy and member care, and to offer a resource for individuals in this category who are seeking satisfactory resolution in their new reality.

APPENDIX 3

SPOUSAL TRANSITION IN MISSION LEADERSHIP

1. Please tell me briefly about your call to be a missionary.
2. What was the nature and duration of your post-secondary education, both ‘secular’ and/or ‘religious’ for overseas missions service?
3. Please give a brief biographical sketch of your ministry career to date (i.e. ministry experience prior to overseas service, what mission agency or denominational mission you went with, what years you served overseas, what kind of ministries you were involved in, your participation in field leadership either with your spouse or on your own).
4. Describe your marriage-and-ministry ethos, and how this has evolved from before you served overseas, to when you were serving overseas, to the present.
5. What was it that caused you not to return to the field?
6. How was the proposal of mission leadership presented to your spouse, and to what degree did you feel included by the mission in that proposal?
7. In the decision-making process, was there any official communication from the mission to you or discussion about the implications for you (i.e. transition of your role, loss of “missionary” status, mission sponsorship, accessibility of tax-deductible funds, policies or guidelines regarding spouses of leaders, financial provision for travel, food, expenses, etc)?
8. How long has it been since your spouse assumed a leadership role in your mission agency or denomination, which necessitates your living in North America?
9. Please describe the nature and intensity of your own transition during this time, and the factors which helped or hindered this process. Did your organization offer you any assistance in the transition (i.e. member care, transition or career counseling)?
10. What opportunities and/or limitations are there for the ministry of a leader’s spouse within your organization, either in a paid position or volunteer capacity?

11. If you are working outside your mission agency or denomination, what motivated you to do so (i.e. policy, personal choice, new calling, financial necessity)? If you are not presently working in a paid position, could you please share your reason for this decision.
12. What are your natural talents, skills, abilities, and spiritual gifts? Are you able to minister according to your calling and primary gifting, either within your organization or outside? Do you feel any sense of role deprivation?
13. What kinds of policies, guidelines and/or remuneration are available in your mission agency or denomination for spouses of leaders, to encourage their participation with their spouse in the organization? Are there any policies, either written or unwritten, which seem to exclude spouses?
14. What influence has your transition had on your attitudes toward yourself, your spouse, and your mission agency?
15. To what degree are you and your spouse satisfied with your present status and role in mission leadership? Is it what you expected? Do you anticipate longevity in it and, if so, do you sense that you are fulfilling what God has called and gifted each of you to do?
16. How have your children fared through this process?
17. Are there any other issues you would like to address? Do you have anything you would like to say to mission agencies/boards?

APPENDIX 4

SAMPLE OF CODED DOCUMENT

Document: C08
Created: 13/03/2007 - 7:08:33 PM
Modified: 19/04/2007 - 7:26:01 PM
Description: [PARTICIPANT]

155: [P]:	<u>Home schooling is a big thing and sometimes they take their children.</u> <u>Some times others look after the other children.</u>	Children connected to ministry in North America
156:		
157: J:	<u>Okay.</u>	
158:		
159: [P]:	<u>Sometimes they will go along and that is what we encourage.</u>	
160:		
...		
449:		
450: [P]:	<u>No wife is responsible to her husband.</u> <u>They all have a different boss.</u>	Accountability for couple
451:		
452: J:	<u>Okay, even if you are working in the same realm or department?</u>	
453:		
454: [P]:	<u>Same office, we would never expect the wife to have the same boss. Its not good for them as a couple and its not good for the rest of the staff.</u>	

APPENDIX 5

FREE NODE LISTING

Number of Nodes: 174

1	Acceptance of new role	40	Couldn't travel bc of kids
2	Accountability for couple	41	Couldn't travel if working
3	Advice to mission	42	Couldn't travel, no childcare
4	Ambiguity about fulfilment in role	43	Defined role
5	Ambiguity about longevity of husband	44	Desire to Help others in Transition
6	Ambiguity about policies	45	Desire to return to field someday
7	Ambiguity about role in NA	46	didn't find niche overseas
8	Ambiguity about who pays for what	47	Didn't fit into ministry overseas
9	Apathy due to lack of opportunity	48	Didn't realize implications until af
10	Asked mission re spouse's role	49	Difficult transition
11	Attitude affects children	50	Diploma in Early Childhood Education
12	Attitude of Spouse affects Husband	51	Diploma in Missions
13	Bachelor in Biblical Studies	52	Disconnected from husband's ministry
14	Bachelor in Christian ED	53	Dissatisfaction with role in NA
15	Bachelor in Missions	54	Doesn't fit into ministry anymore
16	Bachelor in Psychology	55	Domestic help on field
17	Bachelor of Christian Ed & ICS	56	Double standard overseas-NA
18	Bachelor of Education	57	Egalitarian Mission
19	Bible College Diploma	58	Exclusion from leadership team
20	Called as couple	59	failed on the mission field
21	Can travel, have childcare	60	Financial need for spouse to work
22	Can travel, have no children	61	Flexible work enabling travel
23	Can travel, kids are grown	62	Focused on transition of children
24	Can't take kids bc of finances	63	Focused on transition of home
25	Can't travel because of finance	64	Focused on transition of location
26	Can't travel because won't leave kid	65	Formal Member Care
27	Children connected to ministry in NA	66	Found fulfilling ministry in NA
28	Children connected to ministry overs	67	Found fulfilling ministry overseas
29	Children considered in travelling	68	Found ministry that matched spiritua
30	Children disconnected from mission i	69	God provided other ministries
31	Children not considered in Hiring	70	Good transition
32	Children not considered in traveling	71	Health issues in spouse
33	Clarity about longevity	72	Helping others through transition
34	Clarity about policies, guidelines	73	Home-based ministry overseas
35	Communication from missoin	74	Home-based ministry prior to oversea
36	Could travel bc no kids	75	Husband feels for spouse's loss
37	Couldn't do church ministry if trave	76	Husband valued spouse
38	Couldn't get a job if traveling	77	Husband values wife
39	Couldn't travel bc of church mi	78	ICS

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 79 | Inclusion in leadership team | 131 | Mission offered spouse job |
| 80 | Inclusion in ministry at office | 132 | Mission sensitive to cross-cultural |
| 81 | Individual Call | 133 | Mission sensitive to season of life |
| 82 | Informal Member Care | 134 | Mission trusts couple |
| 83 | Initiated connection to other spouse | 135 | Mission trusts leadership couples |
| 84 | Initiated Connections to husband's r | 136 | No communication from mission |
| 85 | Initiated involvement of children | 137 | No formal member care |
| 86 | Initiated ministry together outside | 138 | No informal member care |
| 87 | Lack of awareness from mission | 139 | Not included~included in hiring |
| 88 | Lack of concern from mission | 140 | Not involved in field leadership |
| 89 | lack of confidence | 141 | Nurse's training |
| 90 | Lack of empathy from mission | 142 | Overwhelmed with leadership in NA |
| 91 | Lack of guidelines for spouses | 143 | patriarchal mission |
| 92 | Lack of regard for family | 144 | People valued over policy |
| 93 | Lack of time given to decide | 145 | Personal fulfilment of call |
| 94 | Lack of value from mission | 146 | Policy preventing travel |
| 95 | Lay ministry in church | 147 | Policy preventing work in office |
| 96 | Leadership over husband | 148 | Policy valued over people |
| 97 | Leadership together on the field | 149 | Pre-retirement |
| 98 | Leadership together overseas | 150 | Resignation to living in NA |
| 99 | Learned language on field | 151 | Resignation to ministry apart in NA |
| 100 | Loss of Christian schooling overseas | 152 | Resignation to support role |
| 101 | Loss of domestic help | 153 | Retained missionary status |
| 102 | Loss of international travel | 154 | Returned to other profession in NA |
| 103 | Loss of ministry to use spiritual gi | 155 | Role confusion |
| 104 | Loss of ministry together | 156 | Satisfaction with role overseas |
| 105 | Loss of missionary 'family' | 157 | Spiritual gifts |
| 106 | Loss of missionary status | 158 | Submitted to constituted authority |
| 107 | Loss of MK schooling | 159 | Taught in Bible Institute overseas |
| 108 | Loss of status, identity | 160 | Tokenism |
| 109 | Masters degree in seminary | 161 | Transition care |
| 110 | Masters studies in Seminary | 162 | Travel of spouse not paid by mission |
| 111 | Ministry before marriage | 163 | Travel of spouse paid by mission |
| 112 | Ministry outside of spiritual gifts | 164 | Travel permitted by mission |
| 113 | Ministry separate back in NA | 165 | Travel permitted through airmiles |
| 114 | Ministry separate before overseas | 166 | Traveled when found babysitters |
| 115 | Ministry separate overseas | 167 | Value from mission |
| 116 | Ministry together as value | 168 | Vicarious fulfillment of call |
| 117 | Ministry together in NA | 169 | Volunteer work for monthly mail-outs |
| 118 | Ministry together on field | 170 | Volunteer work to help husband |
| 119 | Ministry together overseas | 171 | Welcoming~non atmosphere to spouse |
| 120 | Ministry together prior to overseas | 172 | Work before missionary service |
| 121 | Ministry together through traveling | 173 | Worked in office |
| 122 | Ministry using spiritual gifts | 174 | Worked outside office |
| 123 | Mission asked couple | | |
| 124 | Mission asked husband only | | |
| 125 | Mission changed policy | | |
| 126 | Mission encourages spouse's travel | | |
| 127 | Mission had different ethos | | |
| 128 | Mission has couple-ethos | | |
| 129 | Mission has family ethos | | |
| 130 | Mission is flexible | | |

APPENDIX 6

TREE NODE LISTING

Number of Nodes: 191

- 1 .Mission Field
- 2 .Mission Field.Call
- 3 .Mission Field.Call:Called as couple
- 4 .Mission Field.Call:Individual Call
- 5 .Mission Field.Education
- 6 .Mission Field.Education:Bachelor in Biblical Studies
- 7 .Mission Field.Education:Bachelor in Christian ED
- 8 .Mission Field.Education:Bachelor in Missions
- 9 .Mission Field.Education:Bachelor in Psychology
- 10 .Mission Field.Education:Bachelor of Christian Ed & ICS
- 11 .Mission Field.Education:Bachelor of Education
- 12 .Mission Field.Education:Bible College Diploma
- 13 .Mission Field.Education:Diploma in Early Childhood Education
- 14 .Mission Field.Education:Diploma in Missions
- 15 .Mission Field.Education:ICS
- 16 .Mission Field.Education:Learned language on field
- 17 .Mission Field.Education:Masters degree in seminary
- 18 .Mission Field.Education:Masters studies in Seminary
- 19 .Mission Field.Education:Nurse's training
- 20 .Mission Field.Education:Work before missionary service
- 21 .Mission Field.Marriage
- 22 .Mission Field.Marriage:Husband valued spouse
- 23 .Mission Field.Marriage:Husband values wife
- 24 .Mission Field.Marriage:Leadership over husband
- 25 .Mission Field.Marriage:Leadership together on the field
- 26 .Mission Field.Marriage:Leadership together overseas
- 27 .Mission Field.Marriage:Ministry separate before overseas
- 28 .Mission Field.Marriage:Ministry separate overseas
- 29 .Mission Field.Marriage:Ministry together as value
- 30 .Mission Field.Marriage:Ministry together on field
- 31 .Mission Field.Marriage:Ministry together overseas
- 32 .Mission Field.Ministry
- 33 .Mission Field.Ministry:Children connected to ministry overs
- 34 .Mission Field.Ministry:didn't find niche overseas
- 35 .Mission Field.Ministry:Didn't fit into ministry overseas
- 36 .Mission Field.Ministry:Domestic help on field
- 37 .Mission Field.Ministry:failed on the mission field
- 38 .Mission Field.Ministry:Found fulfilling ministry overseas
- 39 .Mission Field.Ministry:Home-based ministry overseas

40 .Mission Field.Ministry:Ministry before marriage
 41 .Mission Field.Ministry:Ministry separate before overseas
 42 .Mission Field.Ministry:Not involved in field leadership
 43 .Mission Field.Ministry:Satisfaction with role overseas
 44 .Mission Field.Ministry:Taught in Bible Institute overseas
 45 .Mission Field.Sp Gifts
 46 .Mission Field.Sp Gifts:Ministry using spiritual gifts
 47 .Mission Field.Sp Gifts:Spiritual gifts
 48 .Mission Leadership
 49 .Mission Leadership.Ethos
 50 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Accountability for couple
 51 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Ambiguity about policies
 52 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Egalitarian Mission
 53 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Flexible work enabling travel
 54 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Mission had different ethos
 55 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Mission has family ethos
 56 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Mission is flexible
 57 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Mission sensitive to cross-cultural
 58 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Mission sensitive to season of life
 59 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Mission trusts couple
 60 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Mission trusts leadership couples
 61 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:patriarchal mission
 62 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:People valued over policy
 63 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Policy preventing travel
 64 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Policy preventing work in office
 65 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Policy valued over people
 66 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Travel permitted by mission
 67 .Mission Leadership.Ethos:Welcoming~non atmosphere to spouse
 68 .Mission Leadership.Longevity
 69 .Mission Leadership.Longevity:Ambiguity about longevity of husband
 70 .Mission Leadership.Longevity:Clarity about longevity
 71 .Mission Leadership.Longevity:Desire to return to field someday
 72 .Mission Leadership.Proposal
 73 .Mission Leadership.Proposal:Lack of time given to decide
 74 .Mission Leadership.Proposal:Mission asked couple
 75 .Mission Leadership.Proposal:Mission asked husband only
 76 .Mission Leadership.Proposal:Not included~included in hiring
 77 .Mission Leadership.Status
 78 .Mission Leadership.Status:Ambiguity about role in NA
 79 .Mission Leadership.Status:Clarity about policies, guidelines
 80 .Mission Leadership.Status:Disconnected from husband's ministry
 81 .Mission Leadership.Status:Doesn't fit into ministry anymore
 82 .Mission Leadership.Status:Double standard overseas-NA
 83 .Mission Leadership.Status:Exclusion from leadership team
 84 .Mission Leadership.Status:Inclusion in leadership team
 85 .Mission Leadership.Status:Inclusion in ministry at office
 86 .Mission Leadership.Status:Lack of value from mission
 87 .Mission Leadership.Status:Loss of missionary status
 88 .Mission Leadership.Status:Loss of status, identity
 89 .Mission Leadership.Status:Retained missionary status
 90 .Mission Leadership.Status:Role confusion
 91 .Mission Leadership.Status:Tokenism

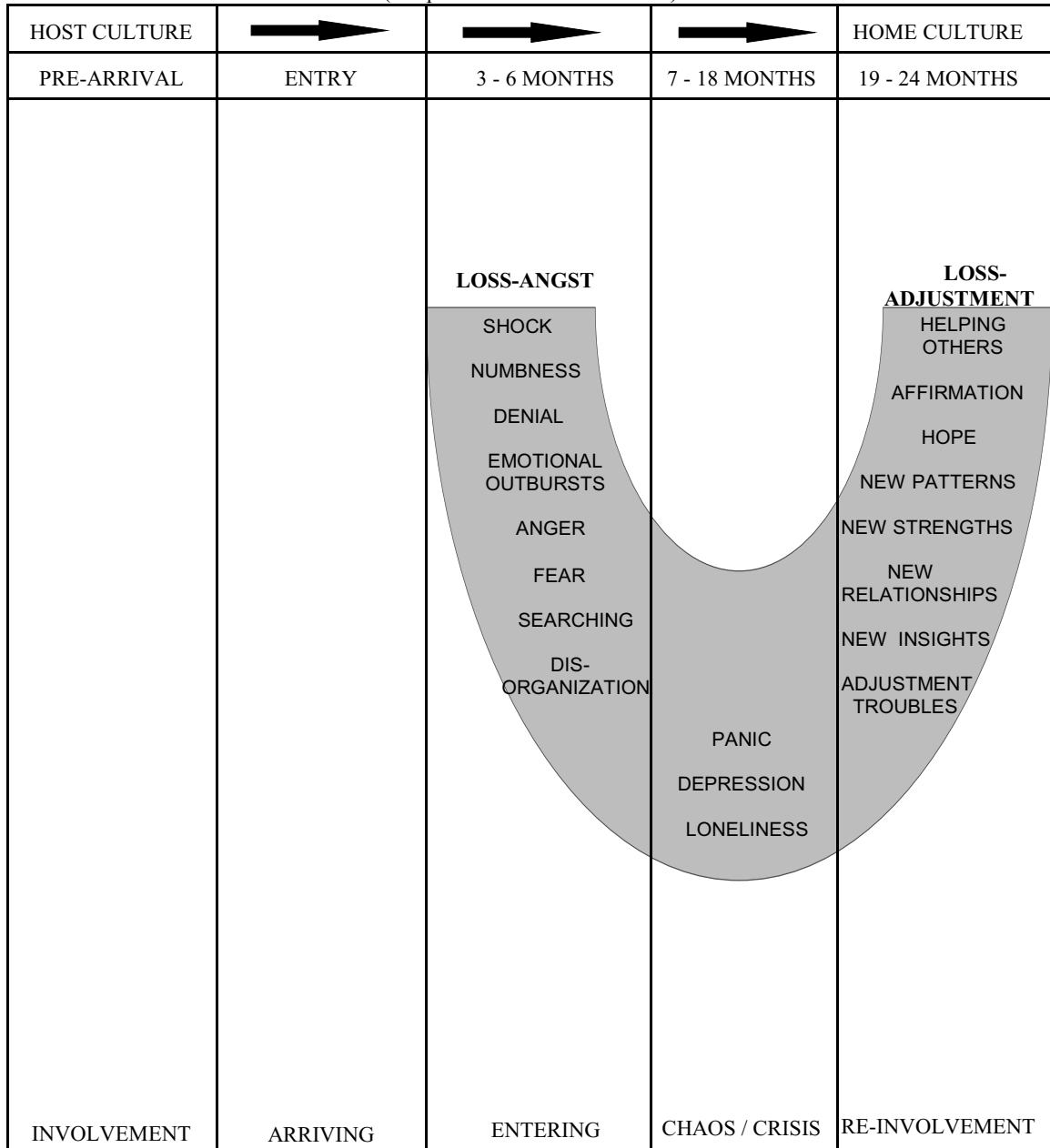
- 92 .Mission Leadership.Status:Volunteer work for monthly mail-outs
- 93 .Mission Leadership.Status:Volunteer work to help husband
- 94 .Mission Leadership.Status:Worked in office
- 95 .Mission Leadership.Status:Worked outside office
- 96 .Mission Leadership.Transition
- 97 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Ambiguity about who pays for what
- 98 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Asked mission re spouse's role
- 99 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Communication from missoin
- 100 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Didn't realize implications until af
- 101 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Formal Member Care
- 102 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Informal Member Care
- 103 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Lack of awareness from mission
- 104 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Lack of concern from mission
- 105 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Lack of empathy from mission
- 106 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Lack of guidelines for spouses
- 107 .Mission Leadership.Transition:No communication from mission
- 108 .Mission Leadership.Transition:No formal member care
- 109 .Mission Leadership.Transition:No informal member care
- 110 .Mission Leadership.Transition:Transition care
- 111 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership
- 112 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Advice
- 113 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Advice:Advice to mission
- 114 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Advice:Desire to Help others in Transition
- 115 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Advice:Helping others through transition
- 116 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes
- 117 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Acceptance of new role
- 118 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Ambiguity about fulfilment in role
- 119 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Apathy due to lack of opportunity
- 120 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Attitude affects children
- 121 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Attitude of Spouse affects Husband
- 122 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Dissatisfaction with role in NA
- 123 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:lack of confidence
- 124 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Pre-retirement
- 125 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Resignation to living in NA
- 126 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Resignation to ministry apart in NA
- 127 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Resignation to support role
- 128 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Attitudes:Submitted to constituted authority
- 129 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children
- 130 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Attitude affects children
- 131 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Can't take kids bc of finances
- 132 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Children connected to ministry in NA
- 133 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Children disconnected from mission i
- 134 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Children not considered in Hiring
- 135 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Children not considered in traveling
- 136 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Initiated involvement of children
- 137 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Lack of regard for family
- 138 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Loss of Christian schooling overseas
- 139 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Children:Loss of MK schooling
- 140 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues
- 141 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Can travel, have childcare
- 142 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Can travel, have no children
- 143 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Can travel, kids are grown

- 144 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Can't travel because won't leave kid
- 145 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Could travel bc no kids
- 146 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Couldn't do church ministry if trave
- 147 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Couldn't get a job if traveling
- 148 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Couldn't travel bc of church mi
- 149 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Couldn't travel bc of kids
- 150 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Couldn't travel if working
- 151 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Couldn't travel, no childcare
- 152 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Difficult transition
- 153 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Financial need for spouse to work
- 154 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Focused on transition of children
- 155 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Focused on transition of home
- 156 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Focused on transition of location
- 157 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Health issues in spouse
- 158 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Husband feels for spouse's loss
- 159 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Loss of domestic help
- 160 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Loss of international travel
- 161 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Loss of ministry to use spiritual gi
- 162 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Loss of ministry together
- 163 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Loss of missionary 'family'
- 164 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Ministry outside of spiritual gifts
- 165 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Ministry separate back in NA
- 166 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Overwhelmed with leadership in NA
- 167 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Travel of spouse not paid by mission
- 168 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Travel of spouse paid by mission
- 169 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Travel permitted through airmiles
- 170 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Issues:Traveled when found babysitters
- 171 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution
- 172 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Ambiguity about fulfilment in role
- 173 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Defined role
- 174 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Found fulfilling ministry in NA
- 175 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Found ministry that matched spiritua
- 176 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:God provided other ministries
- 177 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Good transition
- 178 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Initiated connection to other spouse
- 179 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Initiated Connections to husband's r
- 180 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Initiated ministry together outside
- 181 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Lay ministry in church
- 182 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Ministry together in NA
- 183 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Ministry together through traveling
- 184 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Ministry using spiritual gifts
- 185 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Mission offered spouse job
- 186 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Personal fulfilment of call
- 187 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Returned to other profession in NA
- 188 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Value from mission
- 189 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Vicarious fulfillment of call
- 190 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Worked in office
- 191 .Trailing Spouse in Mission Leadership.Resolution:Worked outside office

APPENDIX 7

THE NORMAL GRIEF RECOVERY JOURNEY INTERFACED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF REPATRIATION FOR TRAILING SPOUSES

(Adapted from Westwood 2007a)



APPENDIX 8

NORMAL RESPONSES TO REPATRIATION FOR TRAILING SPOUSES

(Adapted from Westwood 2007b; Gardner 2001b)

	HOST CULTURE	➔	➔	➔	HOME CULTURE
	PRE-ARRIVAL	ENTRY	3 - 6 MONTHS	7 - 18 MONTHS	19 - 24 MONTHS
JOURNEY UPWARD	Effortless Faith: Love expressed in effortless ways for the sake of others	Ethno-Relative Faith: Love expressed in mature and mediating ways	Ego-Centric Faith: Love expressed in self-centered ways Ethno-Centric Faith: Love expressed in ethnic ways	Ego-Centric Faith: Love expressed in self-centered ways Ethno-Centric Faith: Love expressed in ethnic ways	Effortless Faith: Love expressed in effortless ways for the sake of others
JOURNEY INWARD	Physically weary Anticipation Expectation Excited Fearful Decreased interest in the present	Honeymoon Stage: Excited Enthusied Motivated Energetic Anxious Apprehensive	Loss/Grief Stage: Adaption strain Loss of status and self-esteem Frustration/Stress Confusion Disillusionment Anger Depression Rejected Rejecting	Loss/Grief Stage: Adaption strain Loss of status and self-esteem Frustration/Stress Confusion Disillusionment Anger Depression Rejected Rejecting	Four Possible Outcomes Participants: Very involved Very satisfied High performance Adjusters: Self-satisfied Rationalize Adequate performance
JOURNEY OUTWARD	Planning Packing Processing Partying Parting	Meeting new/familiar people Seeing familiar sights Hearing familiar sounds Tasting familiar foods Smelling familiar smells	Avoiding people Escaping places Loss of contact Depersonalization Psychosomatic/physical illness Decreased productivity	Avoiding people Escaping places Loss of contact Depersonalization Psychosomatic/physical illness Decreased productivity	Escapers: Check-out Isolation Re-creation Major Problems: Never learn to cope Unresolved grief Quit

APPENDIX 9

MAPPING MY PERSONAL JOURNEY OF REPATRIATION

(Adapted from Westwood 2007c)

	HOST CULTURE	➔	➔	➔	HOME CULTURE
	PRE-ARRIVAL	ENTRY	3 - 6 MONTHS	7 - 18 MONTHS	19 - 24 MONTHS
JOURNEY UPWARD					
JOURNEY INWARD					
JOURNEY OUTWARD					

APPENDIX 10

QUESTIONS COUPLES CONSIDERING MISSION LEADERSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA SHOULD ASK THE MISSION AGENCY AND INFORMATION COUPLES SHOULD DISCLOSE

Doctrinal Views

- What are the doctrines on women ministry and leadership in the mission agency and in the church denomination(s) which supports it?
- Do these doctrines represent a hierarchical, complementarian, or egalitarian view?

Be honest to disclose each of your own doctrinal views on the above, even if they are different than those of the mission agency.

Doctrinal Practices

- What are the practices in regard to women in leadership in the mission agency and in the church denomination(s) which supports it?
- Are there any differences for women serving overseas and women serving at the mission headquarters in North America, or in the church denomination(s) which support it?
- Are there any differences for single and married women?

Again, be honest to disclose each of your own doctrinal practices, both on the field and what you see as appropriate in North America, if in your opinions the two should differ.

- Could you please discuss any official or unofficial restrictions for women in ministry and leadership in the mission agency and its supporting church(es) and denominational headquarters?
- Could you please give examples of other women serving in upper-level leadership positions in the mission agency headquarters, on its board, and/or in churches or at the head offices of the supporting denomination(s).
- Are any of them married, and are any of the married ones wives of the mission agency or denominational leaders? Could we please have their contact information?
- If not, are any of the wives of mission agency or denominational leaders involved in unofficial roles connected to the ministry? Could we please have their contact information?
- How are women in leadership viewed by colleagues at the mission agency headquarters, on the board, and in the church denomination(s) which support the agency?

Leadership Proposal

If the mission agency does not contact you together as husband and wife (only the husband), then the husband should take initiative to ask for the wife to be included before further discussion

takes place. If it is a phone call, request to have her join the conversation (by speaker phone or on a separate extension). Make sure all written correspondence to the agency is signed by both of you, to present a united front and convey to them that you are approaching this as a couple.

Be perceptive to the manner in which the mission agency does/does not include the wife at every phase, as this may be indicative of the mission agency's real attitude toward women, and whether or not they value spouses – specifically whether or not they are interested in the wife's involvement in leadership and ministry at the mission agency headquarters.

- Have you given consideration to each of our training, spiritual gifts and abilities, and respective field ministries before inviting us to consider this leadership proposal?
- Is the proposal just being made to the husband, or is it being made to both of us?
- Are there any restrictions for women married to mission agency and/or denominational leaders? Are they permitted to hold official positions at the headquarters? In the same department as their husband, or must they be in different ones?
- What will the husband's title be, and will it be considered a shared position (a 'two-person single career')? If not, what will the wife's title be for her official position or role in the mission agency, if any? How will she be referred to in the organization?
- Are there job descriptions for each of us? If so, could you please email them to us, or at least give us an idea of what they entail before we make our decision?
- How free will we be to figure out each of our roles and responsibilities?
- Will each of us have our own offices, budgets, expense accounts, health insurance, retirement fund, etc.? If the spouse has none, will she have access to his?
- Will there be any flexibility for working from home?
- What are the precedents and/or how did the previous couple function? Did they work in separate areas or were they free to divide up the one position into tasks appropriate for each of their training, spiritual gifts and abilities?
- To what degree was the previous spouse involved in an official capacity in the mission agency, and to what level was she considered a member of the mission leadership team?

If you as a spouse would like involvement, do not be afraid to point to the information coming out of the evangelical mission community, which shows the best-case scenarios for spouses of mission leaders as being those with well-defined official positions or roles at the headquarters, in close proximity to the husband's ministry, allowing flexibility for travel and participation in leadership together or in parallel ministries to each other.

- Was there a succession plan previously in place?
- How much overlap will we have with the out-going couple? Could you please give us their contact information, so we can be in touch with them as we contemplate our decision?
- How much time will we have to make our decision? We would prefer a month (if not, at least a week or two is reasonable to ask for).
- Will you (person presenting the proposal) and your spouse (if this individual is a mission or denominational leader) and others at the headquarters be available to answer our questions?
- Can we arrange times for more questions and discussion of the items on our list, and the list that you may have (or one which we will be happy to send you if you don't).

Consideration for the Family

- Have you given consideration to the ages of our children and the season of life that our family is in, as to the appropriateness of our taking on the leadership role at this time?

- How much time will be allotted for closing out our ministries on the field, and to prepare our family and belongings to leave – keeping in mind that families need time for proper closure on the field and it is important for children to finish their school year/term? We will likely need a few months.
- How much time will we both have to purchase and settle into our new home, plus transition to life in North America, before beginning each of our responsibilities at the headquarters? We will likely require one to two months before either of us will be ready.

Financial Provisions

- Are there any financial provisions for us to move our belongings to North America?
- Are funds available for re-entry workshops for mission leaders, their wives and children, transition care/counselling if any of them needs it, and career counselling or re-training for the wife if she is not being offered a job in the mission agency?
- What will be our allowance/salary in our mission leadership position(s)?
- How does this compare to the salaries of those at similar levels of responsibility in secular and Christian organizations in the same geographical area?
- Will there be any other extra funds available to augment our income (i.e. health insurance, vehicle/maintenance fund, ministry budgets, travel expenses, air miles, expense accounts, hospitality fund, pastors' housing credit (for tax exemption), tax-deductible charitable fund-raising status through the agency for spouse/children to raise funds for mission trips, etc.)
- If the wife is not being offered a salary from the mission agency, will it likely be necessary for her to find outside work, in order to afford a reasonable standard of living? Can you cite some examples of other couples from the mission headquarters?
- Will we be able to afford a house in the area around the headquarters? Do other employees live in the area, or do they commute? Are there any funds to help us with the downpayment on a home, or for first and last months' rent on an appropriate home or apartment, to suit the size of our family and any ministry which we may be expected to provide in our home?
- Are funds available (or has it been factored into our salaries) to provide for the same type and quality of education that our children have been accustomed to on the mission field? (i.e. Christian school, home school curriculum, etc.)?
- Will you provide funds for further education or training for each of us, appropriate to our new position(s)/roles? How much time is allotted for studies per year, per month, and per week? Will we be eligible for a sabbatical in the future?

Be honest to indicate if you are planning on further education, especially graduate or post-graduate studies, and what your proposed time line is for these studies.

- Will you provide travel expenses for each of us, including visas, airfare, lodging and food?
- Will you cover expenses to maintain our travel eligibility (i.e. immunizations, passports)?
- Will we be permitted to use air miles from our mission flights to enable others (spouse or children) in our family to join us when possible?

Member Care for the Family

- What forms of member care are provided (member care coordinator, board, outside resources, etc.) to aid each member of the mission leader's family in the transition and on a

continuing basis afterwards, to ensure successful repatriation for the family (i.e. re-entry workshops for us and our children, transition care or counselling if needed, and career counselling or training for (wife) if she is not being offered a job in the mission agency)?

- Can you provide the names and contact information of other former-missionary wives of mission/denominational leaders or support groups, either within or outside our mission agency, that you could recommend to offer help in the transition?
- Can you provide the names and contact information of children/teens (especially MKs) of others who work in leadership at the mission/denominational headquarters, in order to befriend and help our kids in the adjustment period? If not, do you know of any colleagues in other mission agencies with headquarters in the area, who have children/teens?
- To what degree are mission leaders afforded flexibility to balance each spouse's mission responsibilities, such that they can attend to the needs of their home and family?
- Are spiritual growth retreats, marriage retreats, etc. provided by the mission agency, or allowed for the couple to attend elsewhere, in order to care for their spiritual growth and preserve their marriage relationship?

Leadership Expectations

- Will either of us be required to give up our missionary status or credentials, and will any other implications result from this (i.e. loss of voting privileges in the denomination).
- Will there be an orientation to the leadership position(s) for the husband *and* the wife?
- Are there any policies or guidelines (written or unwritten) for spouses of mission leaders? (i.e. finance, travel, involvement, etc.) If not, could you please develop some, so that things will be clearer for both of us coming in, and misunderstandings will be prevented.
- Are spouses who do not hold official positions at the mission headquarters expected to perform 'representational duties' (i.e. attend conferences, meetings, social gatherings, extend hospitality, etc), and are they invited/encouraged to partner in the ministry in active and meaningful ways? Could you please give us an idea of what kinds of roles they currently fill, what kinds of volunteer positions they presently occupy, or other ministries that they are involved in connected to the mission agency?
- What initiatives are provided by the mission agency to create an inclusive atmosphere for spouses? Is there a couples-in-ministry ethos at the headquarters, or a more typical North American individualism? Please understand that this will be foreign for us, as we have worked together or in parallel ministries as missionaries, which is more typical on the mission field where both spouses work in full-time ministry together out of offices in their home. We have enjoyed this atmosphere of flexibility and trust from the agency on the field. Will we be afforded this same flexibility and trust at the mission agency headquarters?
- How many weeks of the year is the mission leader expected to travel, and for how many weeks at a time?
- Is there expectation/opportunity for the mission leader's wife to accompany him and, if so, how often? If she works in an official position at the headquarters, do other employees understand and accept this 'privilege' given to her? Is there an atmosphere of flexibility for her hours which takes into consideration travel, evening or weekend work (even if that 'work' means 'representational duties' like extending hospitality in their home or attending official functions)? Does the mission agency (including colleagues) trust the couple with this kind of flexible schedule?
- What is the spouse's role and/or responsibilities during travels? What kinds of ministry opportunities are there for her during these travels or at other agency/denominational events and what ministries did the previous mission leader's wife have during these times?

- Does the mission agency offer any assistance with arrangements (or costs) for childcare during the couple's absence? What has the previous mission leadership couple done?
- What is the spiritual climate of the mission/denominational office? List the means which are in place to foster this (i.e. 'chapel' times, corporate prayer, retreats etc.), including how often they happen and who gives leadership to them and/or carries them out.
- What are the expectations for mission/denominational leaders in terms of involvement in their local church and community?

Involvement of Children

- Are there any opportunities for children's involvement in the mission?
- Are children invited to any functions at the headquarters or events, retreats etc. associated with it, and are they permitted to visit parents at the office? How is this viewed by staff?
- Do any children of other mission and/or denominational leaders currently work or volunteer at the mission agency office, or in association with it? How is this viewed by colleagues?
- As funds or air miles allow, are children permitted to travel with their parents for mission trips, conferences, speaking engagements, etc. How often? Do others at the headquarters include their children in this way? Is it seen as acceptable by other colleagues there?
- Are there any other initiatives provided by the mission to create a family-friendly community in the mission agency or at its headquarters? What is the atmosphere like?
- Do others in leadership at the mission and/or denominational headquarters have children, and what are their approximate ages? May we please have their contact information?

Leadership Accountability and Goals

- What accountability structures and lines of authority are in place?
- Will mentors be provided for each of us in our ministries?
- Will each of us be given specific goals to achieve for the first year in our new roles?
- What long-term goals are there for each of our roles, professional training, further education and spiritual growth?
- At what intervals will evaluations occur for each of us, and could you please explain who will be responsible to conduct them, and their nature and purpose?
- Will we have the opportunity to evaluate how the mission agency has preformed in following through on the things that have been communicated to us (i.e. each of our roles, member care, children, finances, etc.)
- Is accountability provided to ask leadership the 'hard questions', and provide guidelines to protect them from falling into sin?
- Will accountability be provided to ensure we are taking time for sabbath rests, vacations, and spending time with our spouse and children?
- What are the terms of office for the mission leader, and how is each term decided (by appointment or by vote)? What is the maximum number of years or terms a mission leader/couple can serve in this position?
- Do you have a future succession plan in place, or will one or both of us be required to select the next individual/couple? How do leadership transitions occur?

Do you have a corresponding questionnaire for mission agencies, so you will know what questions you should be asking of us, in case we have forgotten to mention something? If not, we will be happy to send one to you before our next discussion.

APPENDIX 11

QUESTIONS THE MISSION AGENCY SHOULD ASK COUPLES CONSIDERING MISSION LEADERSHIP IN NORTH AMERICA AND INFORMATION THE MISSION AGENCY SHOULD DISCLOSE

Doctrinal Views

- Please explain your current view in regard to women in ministry (hierarchical, complementarian, or egalitarian), specifically in relation to women and wives in leadership.
- How do you view each other in relation to the above? (as each of them)

After explaining the agency's doctrine on women in ministry and leadership, and that of the denomination(s) which support the agency, ask each of them:

- Are you in agreement with our doctrine in the mission agency and in the church denomination(s) which supports us, and will you be happy to abide by this?

Doctrinal Practices

- Please describe each of your practices in regard to women in leadership in the mission agency and in the church in your area of the world.
- Do you think there should be any difference in our practices regarding women serving as missionaries and women serving at the mission agency headquarters, or in its supporting denomination(s)/churches in North America?
- Do you think there should be any differences between what is allowed for single or married women?

Explain any official or unofficial restrictions for women in ministry and leadership in the mission agency and its supporting denomination(s)/churches, including any differences in what is allowed on the mission fields and in the churches at home or between single and married women.

Offer examples (or honestly say if there are none) of other women serving in upper-level leadership positions in the mission agency headquarters, on its board, and/or in the churches of the supporting denomination(s) and at their denominational headquarters. Offer contacts.

Give examples, if there are any, of wives of mission agency or denominational leaders who also work in official positions in the same head office, or fill roles related to the mission/denomination, and/or their husbands' ministry. Offer contact information.

Be honest about how women in leadership are viewed by colleagues at the mission agency headquarters, on the board, and in the church denomination(s) which support the mission.

Leadership Proposal

It is very important to contact the husband and wife together, if it is not possible in person, in a phone call where you ask for both of them to join the conversation (by speaker phone or on separate extensions). Make sure all written correspondence is addressed to both spouses. By including the spouse in the proposal at every phase, you not only convey value to her, but will be disclosing your mission agency's attitude toward women, specifically toward her involvement in leadership and leadership at the mission headquarters.

- Can you tell us briefly about each of your training, spiritual gifts and abilities, and respective field ministries, so we can fully understand your background?

Clarify for the couple whether the mission is proposing official positions to both of them, or just to the husband. Let them know what the husband's title will be, whether it will be a shared position (a 'two-person single career') or, if not, what the wife's title will be for her official position or role in the mission agency (if any), and how she will be referred to.

Disclose any restrictions for women married to mission agency and/or denominational leaders. Clarify whether or not they are permitted to hold official positions at the headquarters, in the same department as their husband or in different ones.

Prepare and offer job descriptions for each of them, specifying whether they are paid positions or roles. If you have no job descriptions, give them an idea of what you have in mind and how you will go about creating job descriptions, including how free/not free they will be to figure out their roles and responsibilities between them.

Explain whether one or both of them will have their own offices, budgets, expense accounts, health insurance, retirement fund, etc. If the spouse has none, will she have access to his?

Indicate if there will be any flexibility for working from home.

It may be helpful to discuss the precedents and/or how the previous couple functioned in this/their position(s) or roles, and to what degree the previous spouse was involved in an official or unofficial capacity in the mission agency. Let them know how much overlap they will have with the previous outgoing leadership couple. Offer them their contact information. If possible, have the previous mission leader's spouse or the denominational leader's spouse contact the woman for support and encouragement, and have the couple offer to answer questions and be of assistance to the couple considering mission leadership.

Indicate how much time they will have to decide. Try to give them a month, or at least a week or two. Make yourself and your spouse (if you are a mission/denominational leader) and others at the headquarters available to them to answer their questions. Arrange a couple more times for questions and discussion of the items on this list and the list that they may have (or that you will be happy to give them if they don't).

Explain succession plans for mission leadership in your agency/denomination, both past and future, including terms of office and how leadership transitions are carried out.

Consideration for the Family

- What are the ages of your children (if they have any), and do you feel that the timing is right for you and them to make a transition to North America? In the season of life that your family is in, do you think you are ready to take on this kind of leadership role?

Tell them how much time will be allotted for closing out their ministries on the field, and for preparing their family and belongings to leave, keeping in mind that families need time for proper closure on the field, and it is important for children to finish school years/terms. Also tell them how much time they both will be given to purchase and settle into a new home, plus transition to life in North America, before beginning each of their responsibilities at the agency headquarters – offer them at least a month or two for the transition, if possible.

- What could we do as a mission agency to aid you and your children, should you decide to make this transition to mission leadership in North America?

Financial Provisions

Discuss whose financial responsibility it will be to move their belongings back to North America. Be specific in what financial provisions the mission will provide. Remember, most everything they own is on the field, including their libraries, and it will be difficult for them to replace these.

Indicate whether or not there will be any funds available for re-entry workshops for the couple and their children, transition care or counselling if needed, and career counselling or re-training for the spouse if she is not being offered a job in the mission agency.

Be forthcoming about what each of their salaries will be in their new mission leadership position(s). If you are only offering the husband a salary, say so. Also, be open in comparing this to the pay scales of those at similar levels of responsibility in secular and Christian organizations in the geographical area of the mission headquarters, so the couple will be clear about the standard of living they are being asked to accept.

Let them know whether or not there will be any other extra funds available to augment their income (i.e. vehicle/maintenance funds, ministry budgets, travel expenses, air miles, expense accounts, hospitality fund, pastors' housing credit (tax exemption), tax-deductible non-profit fundraising status through the agency for spouse/children to raise mission trip funds, etc). Be honest about whether it will likely be necessary for the spouse to find outside work if she is not offered a salary from the agency, in order to afford a reasonable standard of living (cite examples of other couples from the headquarters).

Indicate whether it will be feasible to purchase a home while living on the proposed salary(ies) in the area around the headquarters, and whether employees live in that area or have to commute. Discuss any additional provisions, for example to help with the downpayment on a home, or for first and last months' rent on an appropriate home or apartment to suit the size of their family and any ministry which they may be expected to provide in their home.

- What kind of educational option(s) have you chosen for your children on the field?

Discuss whether or not funds are available (or whether they have been factored into their salary(ies) to provide for the same type and quality of education that their children have been accustomed to on the mission field (i.e. Christian school, home school curriculum, etc.)

- Are you considering further education, or are you interested in professional training?

Indicate whether or not the mission agency will provide funds for further education/ training for each of them appropriate to their positions/roles in the mission agency. It would also be helpful at this point to indicate any policies or guidelines on how much time per year/per month/per week they may devote to further study, and/or whether there is any opportunity for a sabbatical in the future.

Member Care for the Family

Disclose what forms of member care the mission agency offers/does not offer (member care coordinator, board, outside resources, etc) to aid each member of the mission leader's family in the transition and on a continuing basis afterwards. Indicate if the mission agency provides re-entry workshops for the couple and their children, transition care or counselling if needed, and career counselling or re-training for the spouse if she is not being offered a job in the mission agency. Express your desire for the successful repatriation and emotional health of the family.

If possible, provide names of other wives of mission/denominational leaders, or groups you could recommend to offer support, within or outside of the mission agency, during transition.

If possible, provide names and contact information of other children/teens (especially MKs) of those working in leadership at the mission/denominational headquarters (or in other mission agency headquarters located in the area), who might be able to link up with the couple's children for friendship and help in the transition.

Discuss to what degree mission leaders are afforded flexibility to balance each spouse's mission responsibilities with their home life, in order to attend to the needs of their home and family. Be honest if the balance will not be equal for each spouse.

Indicate whether or not spiritual retreats, marriage retreats, etc. are provided by the mission agency, or allowed for the couple to attend elsewhere, in order to care for their spiritual growth and marriage relationship.

Leadership Expectations

Disclose whether or not both or one of the spouses will be required to give up their missionary status or credentials, and any other implications that will result from this (i.e. loss of voting privileges in the denomination).

Indicate whether or not there will be an orientation for the leadership couple, or just the husband.

Disclose any policies or guidelines, written or unwritten, for spouses of mission leaders. If there are none written, it would be a good idea to develop something (i.e. for finance, travel, etc). Discuss whether or not wives who do not hold official positions at the mission headquarters are

expected to perform “representational duties” (i.e. attend conferences, meetings, social gatherings, extend hospitality, etc), and to what extent they are invited/encouraged to partner in the ministry in active, meaningful ways. If there are any examples, list what kinds of unofficial roles they currently fill and what kinds of volunteer positions they presently occupy, or other ministries that they are involved in connected to the mission agency. Be honest to admit it if spouses are not highly involved in the organization, so as not to create unrealistic expectations.

Discuss what other initiatives, if any, are provided by the mission agency to create an inclusive atmosphere for wives. If there is not a couples-in-ministry ethos at the headquarters (instead, more typically North American individualism) admit that – but understand that this will be foreign for the missionary couple, who have likely worked together or in parallel ministries, which is typical for missionaries on the mission field. Also, remember that they have each worked full-time in ministry together out of offices in their home. In this context, they have enjoyed an atmosphere of flexibility and trust from the agency. Be honest in telling them to what degree they will be afforded this same flexibility and trust at the mission agency headquarters.

Indicate how many weeks of the year the mission leader will be expected to travel, for how many weeks at a time, and whether there are expectations/opportunities for the mission leader’s spouse to travel with him and how often. If the wife works in an official position at the headquarters, discuss whether other employees understand this privilege given to her, and indicate whether there is an atmosphere of flexibility for her hours which takes into consideration travel, evening or weekend work (even if that ‘work’ means ‘representational duties’ like extending hospitality in their home or attending official functions). Speak frankly about whether the mission agency, including colleagues, trusts the couple with this flexible work schedule, and whether colleagues are accepting of these ‘privileges’ given to the spouses.

Discuss what role/responsibilities the wife has during the travels, if any, and give examples of the types of ministry that are available to her, including how the previous mission leader’s wife has ministered during these travels and at official functions. Also, indicate whether arrangements are made for children (i.e. children’s programs at conferences, retreats), or to assist with childcare (including cost) during the couple’s travels, and what the previous couple did.

Discuss the spiritual climate of the mission/denominational office. List the means which are in place to foster this (i.e. ‘chapel’ times, corporate prayer, retreats etc.) including their frequency and who gives leadership to them and/or carries them out.

- What are the expectations for mission/denominational leaders in terms of involvement in their local church and community?

Involvement of Children

Indicate realistically whether or not there are currently any opportunities for children’s involvement in the mission, if children are invited to any functions at the headquarters, and whether or not they are permitted to visit their parents at the office, and how this is viewed by staff. If there are others at the headquarters who have children, especially those of similar ages to the couple, offer their contact information.

As funds or air miles allow, indicate whether or not and how often children are permitted to travel with their parents for mission trips, conferences, speaking engagements, etc. Indicate whether or not others at the headquarters include their children in this way and how it is viewed.

Indicate whether or not children of other mission and/or denominational leaders currently work or volunteer at the mission agency office or in association with it, for official functions, special events, conferences, etc. How is this viewed in the organization?

Discuss other initiatives which are provided by the mission agency to create a family-friendly community at the headquarters. If there is not currently a family-friendly atmosphere, admit it. If there are no others in leadership with children/teens living at home, admit that children have not been part of the picture, at least not in recent years. If others in leaders at the mission and/or denominational headquarters do have children still at home, given contact information.

Leadership Accountability and Goals

Indicate what accountability structures and lines of authority are in place.

Indicate whether or not mentors will be provided for each of them in their positions/roles.

Indicate whether each of them will be given specific goals to achieve for the first year in their new roles. Outline the long-term goals you have for each of them in their roles, professional training, further education and spiritual growth.

Explain at what intervals evaluations will occur for each of them, who will be responsible to conduct them, and their nature and purpose. Also, invite their evaluative input on how the mission agency performs in following through on the things that have been communicated to the couple (i.e. each of their roles, member care, children, finances, etc.)

Indicate whether or not the mission agency provides accountability to ask leaders the 'hard questions', whether the agency/denomination provides guidelines to protect its employees from falling into sin, and who will take responsibility to protect them by making sure they are taking time for sabbath rests, vacations, and spending time with their spouse and children.

Explain the terms of office for the mission leader, and how each term is decided (by appointment or by vote). Indicate the maximum number of years or amount of terms a mission leader/couple can serve in this position, and how leadership transitions are carried out.

Disclose whether you have a future succession plan in place, or whether the mission leader/couple will be required to select the next individual/couple.

Do you have a corresponding questionnaire for couples considering mission leadership, so you will know what questions you should be asking of us, in case we have forgotten to mention something? If not, we will be happy to send one to you before our next discussion.

REFERENCE LIST

- Adler, Nancy J. 1997. *International dimensions of organizational behavior*. Cincinnati: South-Western College Publishing.
- Austin, Clyde N. 1983a. *Cross-cultural reentry: An annotated bibliography*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University.
- _____. 1983b. Reentry stress: The pain of coming home. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October, 278-287.
- _____. 1986. *Cross-cultural reentry: A book of readings*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University.
- Beaver, R. Pierce. 1980. *American protestant women in world mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. First edition published by Eerdmans in 1968, as *All Loves Excelling*.
- Beck, J.R. 1986. Women in missions: A pilot study. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 14, 224-232.
- Bilezikian, Gilbert. 1986. *Beyond sex roles*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.
- Bolman, Lee G. and Terrence E. Deal. 1997. *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bowers, J.M. 1984. Role of married women missionaries: A case study. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 8, 4-7.
- _____. 1985. Women's roles in mission: Where are we now? *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October, 352-360.
- Bridges, William. 1980. *Transition: Making sense of life's changes*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus.
- Bryson, D.R. and C.M. Hoge. 2003. *A portable identity: A woman's guide to maintaining a sense of self while moving overseas*. Georgetown, TX: Park.
- Carter, J. 1999. Missionary stressors and implications for care. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 27, 171-180.

- Chester, R.M. 1983. Stress on missionary families living in “other culture” situations. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 2(4), 30-37.
- Clark Kroeger, Richard, and Catherine Clark Kroeger. 1992. *I suffer not a woman*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.
- Cocks, L.A. 1997. *Constraints encountered in ministry activity: Single and married women missionaries*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Trinity International University.
- _____. 1998. Women in mission. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, April, 138-139.
- Cook, Clyde. 1981. Wanted: Mission administrators. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October, 213-217.
- Copeland, Anne P. 2002. *Many women many voices: A study of accompanying spouses around the world*. Brookline, MA: The Interchange Institute.
- Corwin, Gary. 1997. Women in mission. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October, 400-401.
- Crawford, N. 2005. Relationship between role perception and well-being in married female missionaries. *Journal of Psychology & Christianity* 33, 187-197.
- Creswell, John W. 1998. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Cunningham, Loren, David Joel Hamilton and Janice Rogers. 2000. *Why not women? A fresh look at scripture on women in missions, ministry and leadership*. Seattle: Youth With a Mission.
- DeVries, S.B. 1986. Wives: Homemakers or mission employees? *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October, 402-410.
- Donovan, Kath and Ruth Myers. 1997. Organizational commitment, age and missionary attrition: a summary of main findings from satisfaction with cross-cultural ministry survey. *Missions Interlink Forum* (July).
- Downey, K. 2005. Missionary or wife: Four needed changes to help clarify the role of a missionary wife. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* January, 66-74.
- Dyer, Kevin. 1989. Leadership transition: Painful but necessary. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, April, 172-173.

- Echerd, Pam, and Alice Arathoon, eds. 1989. *Understanding and nurturing the missionary family*. (Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Quito, Ecuador, January 4-8, 1987, vol. 1). Pasadena, CA: William Carey.
- English, L.L. 1995. *Life dream development of married missionary women*. Doctoral dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Psychology. Dissertation Abstracts International, 56, 05B.
- Fee, Gordon D. 1991. *Gospel and spirit: Issues in New Testament hermeneutics*. Peabody: Hendricksen Publishers.
- Ferguson Hunt, Carroll. 1977. Women missionaries: Making more of their potential. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* July, 149-152.
- France, R.T. 1995. *Women in the church's ministry: A test case for biblical interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Freedman, R. David. 1983. Woman, a power equal to a man. *Biblical Archaeology Review* 9:56-58.
- Fuchs Ebaugh, Helen Rose. 1988. *Becoming an ex: The process of role exit*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Gall, Meredith D., Walter R. Borg, and Joyce P. Gall. 1996. *Educational research: An introduction*. 6th ed. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers USA.
- Gardner, Laura Mae. 2000a. Family issues: The administrator's family. Dallas: WBTI. Photocopied.
- _____. 2000b. *Impact of administrative policies on families: The mentor model*. Dallas: WBTI. Photocopied.
- _____. 2001a. *The Morale curve in job transition: Helping the administrator's wife*. Dallas: WBTI. Photocopied.
- _____. 2001b. *Survival of administrative marriages and families*. Dallas: WBTI. Photocopied.
- _____. 2002. A practical approach to missionary transitions. *Enhancing missionary vitality: Mental health professions serving global mission*, ed. J. Powell and J.M. Bowers, 91-99. Palmer Lake, CO: Mission Training International.
- Gardner, Richard and Laura Mae Gardner. 1992. Supporting mission leaders. *Missionary care: Counting the cost for world evangelization*. ed. K. O'Donnell, 269-279. Pasadena: William Carey.

- Gish, Dorothy. 1983. Sources of missionary stress. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 11, 236-242.
- GMAC Global Relocation Trends Survey. 2006. *GMAC global relocation services, national foreign trade council, and SHRM global forum, sponsors*. Available from <http://www.gmacglobalrelocation.com>. Copied from internet.
- Guthrie, S. 2000. A woman's place in missions. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, July, 356-364.
- Hall, M.E.L. and Nancy S. Duvall. 2003. Married women in missions: The effects of cross-cultural and self gender role expectations on well-being, stress, and self-esteem. *Journal of Psychology & Christianity* 31, 303-314.
- Herndon, H.L. 1980. How many "dropouts" are really "pushouts?" *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* October, 13-15.
- Hester, Allison. 2006. *We're moving where? Surviving life as a trailing spouse*. Available from <http://www.christianemployment.com/resources/articles>. Copied from internet.
- Hines, JoAnn R. 2005. Help for 'The Trailing Spouse': What you can do when you're forced to look for work in a strange place. *Making Bread*, July/August 2005, 8-9.
- Hughes, Katherine. 1998. *The accidental diplomat: Dilemmas of the trailing spouse*. New York: Aletheia.
- Janssen, Gretchen. 1992. *Women on the move: A Christian perspective on cross-cultural adaptation*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Jezequel, Roberta. 2001. When the time comes to move. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, July, 356-359.
- Kalb, Rosalind, and Penelope Welch. 1992. *Moving your family overseas*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Kauffman, Jeffrey. 2002. *Loss of the assumptive world*. U.K.: Taylor & Francis.
- Keenan, Brigid. 2006. *Diplomatic baggage: The adventures of a trailing spouse*. London: John Murray.
- Keener, Craig S. 1992. *Paul, women and wives*. Peabody, MS: Hendrickson Publishers.
- Kohls, Robert L. 1996. *Survival kit for overseas living: For Americans planning to live and work abroad*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.

- Kraft, Marguerite G. (ed). 2003. *Frontline women: Negotiating cross-cultural issues in ministry*. Pasadena: William Carey.
- Kraft, M.. and M. Crossman. 1999. Women in mission. *Mission Frontiers*, Aug. 13-17.
- Laniak, Timothy S. 1998. *Shame and honor in the book of Esther*. Atlanta: Scholars.
- Leedy, Paul D. and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod. 2001. *Practical research: Planning and design*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Lewis, Adalee and Laura Mae Gardner. 2001. Women in missions revisited: Paper in process. Mental Health and Missions Conference, Nov. 15-18. Photocopied.
- Lutz, Lorry. 1997. *Women as risk takers for God*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Maines, Carole. 1983. Missionary wives: Underused asset. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October, 290-295.
- Mandell, Mel and Lindsey Biel. 1994. Global repatriation. *Solutions*, February, 23-26.
- Maxwell, L.W. 1987. *Women in ministry*. Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications.
- McCollum, Audrey T. 1990. *The trauma of moving: Psychological issues for women*. Sage Publications: Library of Social Research.
- McKinney, Lois. 1984. A woman's talent is a terrible thing to waste. *Partners*, January/February, 11-13.
- McNulty, Yvonne. 2005. *The trailing spouse survey*. Available directly from author as an e-document at <http://www.thetrailingspouse.com>.
- Meltzer, Gail, and Elaine Grandjean. 1989. *The moving experience: A practical guide to psychological survival*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Mezirow, Jack. 1991. *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Murray Zoba, Wendy. 2000. Trends in missions: A woman's place. *Christianity Today*, August, 40-48.
- Nelson, Richard D. 1993. *Raising up a faithful priest. Community and priesthood in biblical theology*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox.
- Nicholls, Bruce J. Ed. 1997. Recognizing God's purpose for gender distinctives in marriage and family life, church and society. *Evangelical Review of Theology*, 21(1), 33-37.

- O'Donnell, K.S. 1987. Developmental tasks in the life cycle of mission families. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 15. 281-290
- O'Donnell, K.S. and M.L. O'Donnell. 1988. *Helping missionaries grow: Readings in mental health & missions*. Pasadena: William Carey.
- Pascoe, Robin. 1992. *Surviving overseas: A wife's guide to successful living abroad*. Singapore: Times Books International.
- _____. 1993. *Culture shock: Successful living abroad*. Portland, OR: Graphic Arts.
- _____. 2000. *Homeward bound: A spouse's guide to repatriation*. Vancouver: Expatriate Press.
- _____. 2002. *Culture Shock!: A wife's guide*. Portland, OR: Graphic Arts.
- Patterson, V. 1989. Women in missions: Facing the 21st century. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* January, 62-71.
- Piet-Pelon, Nancy J., and Barbara Hornby. 1992. *Women's guide to overseas living*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Pollock, David C. and Ruth E. Van Reken. 2001. *Third culture kids: The experience of growing up among worlds*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Powell and J.M. Bowers. 2002. *Enhancing missionary vitality: Mental health professions serving global mission*. Palmer Lake, CO: Mission Training International.
- Reapsome, Jim. 1980. Where are female leaders in missions? *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October, 234-235.
- Robert, Dana. 1997. *American women in mission*. Boston: Mercer University Press.
- Seidel, John, Susanne Friese, and D. Christopher Leonard. 1995. *The ethnograph v4.0: A users guide*. Amherst, MA: Qualis Research Associates.
- Shames, Germaine W. 1995. Transnational burnout. *Hemispheres*, February, 39.
- Stackhouse, John G. Jr. 2005. *Finally feminist*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Stassen, Glen H. And David P. Gushee. 2003. *Kingdom ethics: Following Jesus in contemporary context*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

- Steffen, Tom and F. Douglas Pennoyer. 2001. *Caring for the harvest force in the new millenium*. Pasadena: William Carey.
- Storti, Craig. 1990. *The art of crossing cultures*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- _____. 1997. *The art of coming home*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Strickland, W.J. 1990. A typology of career wife roles. *Human Relations*, 45, 797-811.
- _____. 1992. Institutional emotional norms and role satisfaction: Examination of a career wife population. *Sex Roles*, 26, 423-439.
- Stroh, L.K., Dennis, L.E. and T.C. Cramer. 1994. Predictors of expatriate adjustment. *The International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 2, 176-192.
- Sumner, Sarah. 2003. *Men and women in the Church: Building consensus on Christian leadership*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Swartley, Willard M. 1983. *Slavery, sabbath, war and women: Case studies in biblical interpretation*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press.
- Thiessen, Arden. 2002. *The biblical case for equality*. Belleville, ON: Guardian.
- Tucker, Ruth A. 1983. *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A bibliographical history of Christian missions*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- _____. 1988. *Guardians of the great commission*. Grand Rapids: Academie.
- Tucker, Ruth A. and Walter Liefeld. 1987. *Daughters of the Church: Women and ministry from New Testament times to the present*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Ward, Ted. 1984. *Living overseas: A book of preparations*. New York: Free Press.
- Westwood, Duncan. P. 2007a. The normal grief recovery journey as part of the transition experience. Toronto, ON: International Health Management. Photocopied.
- _____. 2007b. Normal responses to the transition experience of cross-cultural adjustment. Toronto, ON: International Health Management. Photocopied.
- _____. 2007c. My personal transition of cross-cultural adjustment. Toronto, ON: International Health Management. Photocopied.
- Wilcox, David K. 1995. Who perseveres? A discriminate analysis of missionary school personnel by intention to extend service. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 23, no. 2: 101-114.

VITA

Julie A. Tiessen (nee Cairns) was born in Ontario, Canada, on June 14, 1966. Tiessen attended Canadian Bible College and graduated in 1987 with a Bachelor of Biblical Studies (honours). She later attended Canadian Theological Seminary and graduated in 1993 with a Master of Divinity in Cross-Cultural Studies (highest honours). Tiessen completed the Arrow Leadership Program in March 2005, and continued on to doctoral studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Charlotte, NC. She successfully defended her thesis-project in May 2007, and graduation is anticipated with a Doctor of Ministry in Leadership in January 2008.